THE LITTLE ONES

Teachers' Notes for Three Years, up to First Communion

By MARY EATON

THE LITTLE ONES

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THE LITTLE ONES

A Course of Religious Instruction for children up to eight years

By

MARY EATON

Religious of the Sacred Heart

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May this book help some of those whose privilege it is to prepare God's way in the hearts of His little ones.

Training College,
Craiglockhart.

Feast of the Holy Innocents, 1922.

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THE LITTLE ONES

FIRST YEAR

I. GOD MADE ME

1. Appeal to eyes, ears, fingers, etc., and ask: "Who gave them to Baby?"

God our Father, Who is in heaven, gave them: He made them.

God gave you ten fingers and ten toes, two legs and two arms, two eyes, etc.—that is the way God made you.

You have brown hair and *you* black hair—*you* have blue eyes and *you* have grey, because that is what God gave to each of you.

God made our eyes to open and to shut; when God makes it dark we go to sleep, and we shut our eyes; when God makes it light again, He wakes us up, and we open our eyes again.

You can do many things: you can laugh—you can sing—you can talk—you can dance—you can clap your hands—(make the babies do some of these actions)—because God made you able to do all these things. **(Develop).**

2. Show the children gold-fish or tadpoles

in a glass bowl—or a canary—or a kitten—or any young thing full of life.

Let them admire and play with it. Then say and get them to say—"God made it."

Repeat, with flowers of many colours: God made the rain that the flower drinks—God made the sun that warms the flower—God made the blue sky—God made everything.

Only God can make the birds to fly—the fish to swim—the kitten to play—the flowers to grow and smell sweet. He made them and everything else too.

We make things out of something He has made and given to us. He makes things with nothing. He simply wanted you and you were made. (Develop).

God made our hearts—we love Father and Mother with all our heart—we love God with all our heart—God gave us our hearts to love Him with.

God made your souls too—He put your soul inside you—He loves your soul—He loves it so much that He lives in it. It is His own little home, where He lives. If you talk to God inside your heart, you will find Him there.

3. When we make something it belongs to us.

God made me, therefore I belong to God. (Develop).

When God made me, He did so because He wanted me—He wanted me for something—What is that something?

He wants me to love Him—that is why He gave me my heart.

He wants me to do what He likes—not always what *I* like.

He likes me to do what I am told.

He likes me to be kind and gentle.

He likes me sometimes to talk to Him. (Develop).

He wants me, and He made me to live here for a long time, doing what He wants—and then some day He means to take me to live with Him in a lovely place, where He will give me everything *I* want for ever

II. THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

1. Show the children a fairly large Crucifix and get them to repeat: "Jesus loves me. Jesus died for me."

2. Tell them that because Jesus died on the Cross, He loves the Cross and we love it too, and He loves us to make a cross to show that we love it. Would they like to make a cross?

Show them how to make it, using of course your left hand and touching your right shoulder first—leave out the words till they know how to make the Sign.

3. Then make the Sign on the Crucifix, with the words.

Touch the sacred Head of Our Lord and say: "In the Name of the Father"—His Feet and add: "and of the Son"—His Left Hand—"and of the Holy"—His Right Hand —"Ghost"—His Heart—"Amen."

Do not attempt any explanation of the words. Doing it on the Crucifix connects the Sign of the Cross with the Passion, and this is enough for the present. The children practise making it at first without the words.

You should make it on yourself very often and sometimes on the Crucifix.

Give no details of the Passion as yet—only, "Jesus loves me—He died for me on the Cross." They will not understand fully, of course, but that does not matter—the very words have power and they will be happy making crosses.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS. (Story)

Object. To familiarise the children with the words. Each time you repeat the words, "Sign of the Cross," make it, saying the words very slowly.

Once upon a time there were two children, who lived near a big wood. One day they were out in the wood when a storm came on. The rain poured down, the wind blew, and it

made such a noise, that both Willie and Margaret were very much afraid. Willie made the Sign of the Cross. (We will all make it with him). In the Name, etc.

"What are you doing, Willie?" asked Margaret.

"I am making the Sign of the Cross," said Willie.

"Why do you do that?" asked Margaret.

"Because I am afraid of the storm," said Willie.

"So am I; but why do you make that Cross?"

"Because that Cross will save me from the storm and from all harm. It will conquer the wind and the rain, it will conquer everything." And he made it again. (In the Name, etc.)

Margaret, who was younger than Willie did not quite understand, but she believed everything Willie said and she began to make the Sign of the Cross too. (In the Name, etc.), and then she asked:

"Is the Cross really as strong as that, and will it really save us from the storm?"

"Yes," said Willie, and just at that moment the wind gave a great howl and he made the Sign of the Cross again. (In the Name, etc.)

Margaret did so too, for she was more frightened even than Willie.

"What do those words mean?" she asked.

"They mean, 'God bless me,'" said Willie,

and as he said it, a big tree gave such a loud crack that both Willie and Margaret made the Sign of the Cross again together. (In the Name, etc.)

"God bless me," said Margaret.

"And me too," said Willie.

The wind seemed to get louder and louder, and the big tree that cracked could not hold up any longer against the storm and it fell with a great crash.

"God bless us," said Willie, and both he and Margaret made the sign of the Cross again. (In the Name, etc.)

"If it had not been for the Sign of the Cross, we should both have been killed."

And just at that moment the wind began to blow more softly, and the rain stopped, and the sun came out, and Willie and Margaret soon got back safely home, for they had not far to go. But Margaret never forgot what Willie had taught her and very often after that, especially when she was frightened about anything, she used to make the Sign of the Cross. (In the Name, etc.), and say: "God bless Willie and me."

III. GOD MADE EVERYTHING

God did not only make me: He made all the other little boys and girls in this room—in this town, and all over the world—all the

big men and women too—and everything else in the world.

Get the children to give as long a list as they can—supplement and suggest.

Get them to go over some of the big pictures used in conversational lessons, and ask them, as each object is named : Who made it ?

Distribute pictures of animals, flowers, children, men and women, and keep each child busy looking at them and repeating softly : " God made *you* and *you* and *you*."

(A good many pictures are required for this, but they are very easily collected from newspapers and magazines—without cost. If pasted on some kind of linen they last much longer and they make a lesson of this kind easier and more attractive.)

Give a lesson on, *e.g.*, " Birds," just as an ordinary conversational lesson—only make the whole turn on God.

God made the bird with its pretty feathers and soft breast ; God made the twigs and the wool and the straw for its nest ; God made its pretty blue eggs ; God loves the little bird, He takes care of it, He gives it food ; He made the trees for it to build its nest in. God made the little bird sing. God knows I like to hear the bird sing, so He made the bird as a present for me, etc.

ANGELS I.

1. We have seen that God made everybody—you and me and all other people in the world.

I am going to tell you to-day about some beautiful people He made to live with Him in Heaven, whom we cannot yet see, but who can see us, and who love us very much—they are called Angels.

(Show picture of Guardian Angel—describe brightly—dwell on the gentle face—the white sparkling robe—the beautiful strong wings). Heaven is a long way from here—up in the blue sky—but they, in a second, can fly from Heaven to earth and back again.

2. Now I must tell you a wonderful thing—God knew when He put us in this world that we should want someone to look after us—Father and Mother were not enough, because they could not always be with us—so—just fancy! when a little boy or girl comes into this world, God sends for one of these bright Angels and says—"My little child (give name of one of the class) has just arrived in that home, down there on the earth, and you, my Angel, are to look after him for Me. Take great care of him—see that he does not hurt himself, and try and keep his soul as white and pure as it is now—every day he lives and when he comes to die,

bring him back to Me, that he may live with Me and with you in our bright Heaven.

Then the Angel God has chosen smiles very brightly (for Angels love doing something for God), and he flies down to earth and stands over that happy little boy or girl, and loves him and takes care of him.

Just think, there are—say—40 little children here, and each one has his own dear Angel to look after him. I told you we cannot see the Angels—we cannot see the fairies or the air in the room either—but our Angel is here, keeping away what might harm us and praying for us, and though it is a pity we cannot see him (refer back to picture) we can talk to him, and if we listen carefully, he will sometimes talk to us. We shall not *hear* his voice but we shall know what he wants to tell us.

When we feel naughty we think of our Angel at our side, and we say: "What does Jesus want me to do?" and the Angel tells us.

When we are cross we say: "Dear Angel, I feel so cross—make me good," and he will help us to be good: and often we say: "Dear Angel, you are good to me: I love you."

3. I will tell you a story, which will show you how much we must love our Guardian Angel.

Once upon a time there was an old man

who lived with his wife and son in a country far away from here. He was a very good old man, but he was blind, and this made him very sad. One day he called his son, who was called Tobias, and said to him: "Go and do what I tell you—I am very poor, but there is a rich man who lives far away from here who owes me a great deal of money—you must go to him and ask him to help us. This made Tobias sad too, because he did not know the way to the home of the rich man, but his father told him to find someone who would show him the way.

So Tobias went out, and who do you think he saw standing just outside the door? . . . A beautiful young man, quite ready to take a walk. And Tobias asked him who he was.

Now I must tell you a secret. The young man did not tell Tobias who he really was—because God did not want Tobias to know just then, but it was—it truly, truly was—Tobias's Guardian Angel!

You see, God loved Tobias and his poor old blind father, and He knew that Tobias would have to go a long way to get the money, and that his Guardian Angel would help him very much. And so it was that Tobias and his dog, who was very fond of him, and who would not be left behind, and the Guardian Angel, all set out together—and they came to a big river—and a great

big fish jumped out of the river on to Tobias, and it was just going to eat him up, when Tobias called out to his Guardian Angel (only he did not know it was his Guardian Angel): "Help me! Help me!" And his Guardian Angel said: "Take hold of the fish and don't be afraid!" and Tobias did as he was told, and he caught the fish and killed it, and cooked it. So after all, it was Tobias who ate the fish, and the wicked fish did not touch Tobias, and all because he did what his Guardian Angel told him!

After that they got to the house where the man was who owed the money. And Tobias found there a beautiful Princess, whose name was Sara, and he married her and they were very happy. And the Guardian Angel stayed with Tobias all this time; and at last they remembered the poor old, blind father, and Tobias thought he had better go back home again, because he knew that his father would be very sad without him. So they set out—Tobias and Sara and the Guardian Angel and the little dog, and they all got home quite safe. But the little dog was so glad to be at home again, and ran on so quickly that he got there first, and by barking, jumping and wagging his tail, he told the old man who was coming. And the poor old blind father began to run too to meet his son, and he gave his hand to a man who was standing

near, because he was afraid of falling, and he went to meet Tobias. Then he and Tobias and Sara the Princess, and the Guardian Angel, all thanked God and were very happy.

But that was not all, for the Guardian Angel told Tobias to put some stuff on his father's eyes, and he did so, and the old man gave a great cry, saying: "I bless Thee, O Lord," and he was no longer blind but could see quite well with his two eyes just as well as you can.

They made a great feast, which lasted seven days, and when it was over, suddenly Tobias saw the young man who had been so kind and done so much for him all this time, now changed into a beautiful Angel, with lovely wings, which he had kept hidden all the time, so that Tobias never even guessed that he was an Angel; and the Angel said to him: "Peace be to you, for I must now go back to Heaven, but bless God and tell everybody how good He is."

And Tobias tried to thank the Guardian Angel, but he flew back to Heaven, and Tobias could see him no more, but he knew that though he could not see him, he would come back again, and he never forgot his wonderful Guardian Angel, but he loved him all his life. And Tobias and Sara and the old father, no longer blind, but seeing with

his two eyes, and the little dog, lived happily till they were too old to live any more, and then they too went to Heaven.

Now this is a truly true story.

ANGELS II.

If we could each have a pair of wings, strong enough to carry us anywhere, where would *you* like to fly to?

(Get answers).

It would be great fun: let us pretend:

I am going to fly up and up till I get to Heaven: that is the beautiful place where God lives.

I am going to pay a little visit and then fly back again. Who will come with me?

Now we must shut our eyes tight and fancy we are going up, up, up through the blue sky! . . . Ah! what is that? Why I declare there are two beautiful gates—not shut—wide open.

. . . And who is that? What a beautiful Angel! (Show picture). He is all white and his wings are glistening—he looks gentle and kind—let us speak to him!

"Dear Angel—we are earth-children, and we have shut our eyes tight, and we thought we were flying up—up—up, so high till we reached these beautiful gates. Please, will you tell us if this is Heaven?

The Angel shakes his head—"No," he says, "this is not Heaven—only a beautiful place, where earth-children may come, whenever they are tired, and talk to the Angels, and ask them any question they like."

So now, we can ask our Guardian Angel any questions we like.

I am going to begin: "Please, dear Angel, are there many Angels in Heaven?"

And the Angel says: "Yes, a great, great many: all shining, and bright and beautiful."

"Please, dear Angel, is Heaven a beautiful place?"

And the Angel answers: "Yes, so beautiful, that only beautiful people are let in."

"Please, dear Angel, what shall I do when I get to Heaven?"

And the Angel says: "The thing you like best, all day long, and it is always day in Heaven."

"Please, dear Angel, whom shall I see in Heaven?"

And the Angel's wings tremble, and he bows his head, and he says in a low voice: "GOD." . . .

Is not that wonderful, children?

(If possible, get the little ones to ask questions; if none are forthcoming, go straight on, but to provoke questions should be one of our chief aims in all this teaching).

There is another Angel (picture); how busy

he is! See, he is gathering roses. Shall I tell you why?

When little earth-children say a wee prayer, the Angels hear them, and sometimes our Guardian Angel—sometimes another Angel catches it up and turns it into a lovely rose, and he flies off with it to Heaven, to offer it to Baby Jesus. And of all the roses that are offered to Jesus, the ones he likes best are those that the Angels have taken from the lips of little children like you.

So be quite sure to say some little prayers to Baby Jesus every day.

See, here is another Angel, but he is flying down from Heaven to earth. I wonder what he is carrying? He has got something in his arms: what do you think it is? Can you guess? (Obtain some guesses).

Now, I will tell you: he is going to some little children, who are sick and in bed, and in pain, and he is carrying them each a happy dream, sent to them by Baby Jesus to make them forget their pain and have a nice, quiet sleep.

I will tell you one of these dreams, that came straight from Heaven and was carried by Angels.

It was not sent to a sick little child, but to a poor, weary man, who had to take a long journey. It was sent by God long, long ago, and the man's name was Jacob.

He had to go into a country he had never seen before, and he walked and walked and walked all through the day, and yet, when evening came, he had not got to the place he wanted to go to. But he was very tired and it began to get quite dark; so he said to himself: "I cannot walk any more; I am too tired, I must lie down and go to sleep."

He had no nice bed to lie down on, so he took some hard stones that he found on the road and put them under his head instead of a pillow and . . . he fell fast asleep.

And God was sorry for him because he had walked so far and was so tired, so He sent His Angels to give him a beautiful dream. (Just like the Angel we saw just now, who was carrying dreams to the little sick children).

This was the dream God sent Jacob when he was asleep, after having walked so far.

Jacob saw in his sleep a ladder. (Draw one on B.B.). It was such a big ladder: its foot was on the earth like this one, but it went up and up right through the blue sky (as we wanted to do) . . . until the top of the ladder reached heaven. And who do you think was on the ladder?

Why, Angels of course: some going up from earth to Heaven, carrying gifts from earth-children to God—others coming down

all the way from Heaven to earth, bringing God's gifts to earth.

It was a beautiful dream, and Jacob loved it—the Angels were so bright, and when he woke he thanked God, and found that he was not even one little bit tired, so he went on his journey again and arrived at the place he wanted to go to.

So you see, it is quite easy for the Angels to go from Heaven to earth and from earth to Heaven. They can fly if they like, or if they like the ladder better, they can go by it instead.

THE ANNUNCIATION

We have seen how beautiful Angels are—how we each have a Guardian Angel to take care of us, and how there are many, many Angels in Heaven.

Not all of these are Guardian Angels, but all of them are busy doing what God wants them to do. Some of these Angels are very great Princes in Heaven, and to-day I am going to tell you what happened to one of these Princes long, long ago, the most wonderful thing that has ever happened in this world.

But first I want you to remember that God often sends His Angels down with a message

from Him: sometimes it is a dream, like the one he sent to Jacob, sometimes it is to tell His earth-children something that He wants them to know.

Well, many, many years ago, God called one of the great Prince-Angels and gave him a message to take to earth.

(If the children do not know what a message means, make them take a few from you to the class and from the class to you).

When the great Prince-Angel, whose name was Gabriel, had heard what God said, he bowed very low, and all the other Angels' wings trembled, and they bowed too, for it was such a wonderful message.

And Gabriel did what God told him, and flew straight from Heaven to earth, and he never stopped anywhere till he came to the little town to which God had sent him.

In this little town there was a little street, where in a little house lived a very beautiful maiden, and her name was Mary. She was fifteen years old—she was poor, and she was so holy that the great Prince-Angel bowed before her and said: "Hail, full of grace!"

Mary was a little frightened at first, not at the sight of the great Angel, for that made her very glad, but at what he said.

But Gabriel told her not to fear, because God was pleased with her, and had sent him to her, to ask her to be the Mother of God.

"To be the Mother of God!" that was such a wonderful thing that again Mary wondered and asked: "How can this be?" But Gabriel told her it was God Who was to do this thing—God Who can do all things—everything—and Mary saw that God wanted her to say "yes," and so she answered: "Be it done to me, as you have said."

And the Angel bowed again, because Mary, who had been chosen to be Mother of God, was, he knew, to be some day Queen of Angels too; and then, full of joy, he flew straight back to Heaven, where all the other Angels came out to meet him. "Good news," he cried: "Good news, for heaven—good news for earth!" And as soon as he was gone, Mary fell upon her knees and whispered: "God—God—God!"

She knew now what the Angel meant: God loved us all so much that He wanted to send His only Son to live on this earth just as we do. He wanted Him to come as a little baby—just as each of you came on to this earth, and He wanted Mary to be the Mother of His little Baby Son, and She had said She would.

Follow this story up on the following day, by showing the children a big picture of the Annunciation, and getting them to recognise Our Lady and the Angel, and to tell you what they remember of the story.

Talk to them about Our Lady, and get them to ask questions: your chief object is to get the little ones to realise that She loves them, and then that they love Her.

Tell them in as many different ways as possible that the Baby Jesus and Mother Mary love them—that we must love them too. How much? Open your arms a little: "So much?" They open their arms by degrees till they are stretched out wide: "So much."

An explanation of the well-known picture: "The breadth of My Love" would be an excellent way of ending this lesson, but the idea alone is suitable, not the name.

V. THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM*

(Story and Play)

Not long after the beautiful Angel had left holy Mary, one day there came a knock at the door of the little house, in the little street, and a proud, rough-looking man came in with some big papers in his hand. He did not speak to our dear Lady as the Angel had done, and he did not bow low, but he told her in a rude way, that she was to leave the little town where she was, and go to Bethlehem. (Bethlehem was the name of the town, just as . . . is the name of the town where we live).

Bethlehem was some way off, but the King

* Luke ii., 1-6.

from whom the rough man came, had ordered everybody to go to Bethlehem, and write their names in a big book, so that the King might count them up and see how many people there were altogether.

You remember that Mary had promised to be the Mother of Baby Jesus, and it was in Bethlehem that Baby Jesus was to be born. Holy Mary knew this, so she was not surprised at the rude man's message.

Now there lived in the little house where Mary lived Mary's husband—a great Saint—whose name was Joseph—He took great care of Mary, because God had told him to, and he loved her very much, and an Angel had told him that Baby Jesus was coming, and that he was to take great care of Him too.

When St. Joseph heard the rough man's message he answered that both he and Mary would go straight to Bethlehem, and then the rough man went away and slammed the door after him.

Both Mary and Joseph began at once to get ready. They were very poor, and all they had to take with them was a donkey (show picture), on which Our Lady rode, and a little bundle of clothes, for Mary and St. Joseph and Baby Jesus, when He came.

And now would you like to go with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, where Baby Jesus was to be born?

Get the children to march two by two round the room, to music.

One represents Our Lady, another St. Joseph, and these go first and wear some distinctive mark.

A few of the children go to one side of the room, e.g. by B.B.—representing the inhabitants of Bethlehem.

When the march has lasted long enough, they reach Bethlehem.

St. Joseph knocks against the wall, or against B.B. etc., and says: "May we come in?" and each of the Bethlehemites answers in turn: "No room: no room:"

Mary and Joseph, followed by the rest of the children, go away very sad.

VI. THE NATIVITY

Preparation. Conversational Lesson during the week, on an Ox. Pictures and a rough sketch of the cave on brown paper or on B.B.

The cave is empty except for the Manger (teach word and thing) and the straw. Give some straw to the children.

For all the coming work, a Crib is badly needed.

A pretty, devotional one can easily be made at practically no cost.

1. Procure a packing-case of convenient

size. Stand the case on its side on a board, large enough to give a border all round, about six inches wide. Nail the case to the board.

2. Take 2 oz. of Vandyke brown powder paint, and a penny packet of size. Dissolve the size in half-a-pint of boiling water, and mix the paint.

Paint the packing-case inside and out, and the border as well.

3. Procure some bits of bark off an old tree. Nail or glue these to the sides and top of the Crib.

4. Put some bits of clinkers and cinders on to the sides of the Crib, and also on the border at the back. Fill up the holes between them with putty, and put bits of yew and evergreen into the putty.

5. Cover the foreground with thick size or glue. Throw down dried moss and bits of gravel on to this, and press it down with your hands.

6. Procure a devotional coloured print of the Nativity, the figures to be in proportion to the size of your crib. Cut out the Figures of Our Lady, St. Joseph and the Holy Child, also the Manger, the Ox and the Ass. Paste them on to stiffish cardboard and put them under a flat weight. In every case, let the cardboard at the base of the Figure protrude about a couple of inches.

When the Figures are dry, bend these two

inches of cardboard back and fasten the Figures in position, inside the crib, with drawing-pins.

If a back support is also necessary, one can easily be made of a flap of cardboard, but if the cardboard is fairly stiff, the Figures will stand quite well without.

The Shepherds and the Kings, the Star, etc., should be added as required.

A pretty room, which can be used for e.g. the Annunciation, the Last Supper, the marriage Feast of Cana, etc., etc., can easily be made in the same way as the above, and will be found useful and effective.

THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY*

Link up with the last lesson by reminding the children how they went to Bethlehem with Mary and Joseph, and tried to find room for them. What did all the people answer?

Then continue the story.

The night came on, it was winter time and cold and dark, white snow was on the ground, and only the stars seemed bright and happy; they were twinkling overhead as if they were sending a secret message to one another, but no one noticed them: if only people had listened they would have heard the secret: "Baby Jesus is coming, Baby Jesus is com-

*Luke ii., 6, 7.

ing." But no one paid any attention, and poor St. Joseph, who had charge of our dear Lady Mary, and who was to take care of Baby Jesus when He came, became very sad, because everyone was so rude and went on saying: "No room, no room." If only *you* had been there, you could have given your room, and your little bed to Baby Jesus, but everyone was so busy, and there were so many people in Bethlehem already, that there was no room, no room. What was St. Joseph to do?

Just at that moment a man came up and seeing Our Lady sitting on a bench—he did not know who She was, only that She looked very tired—he asked St. Joseph what he wanted.

St. Joseph told him that he wanted a room for the night, but the man answered just as the others had done: "No room, no room!" but then he added: "There is a cave behind my house, where I keep my ox; you can have that for the night, if you like."

It was just like the cave you saw in the picture (put picture up again), and though it was indeed a poor place for Our Lady and St. Joseph and Baby Jesus, who was coming, St Joseph thanked the man and went back to fetch the ass which he had left in the town and he fastened him up, just near the ox.

He made Our Lady sit down for She was

very tired, and then he swept and tidied the cave, after he had lit the little lamp he had brought with him.

Our Lady asked him to put the manger by Her side for Baby Jesus, who was coming, and St. Joseph filled it full of fresh straw and placed it by Her.

Then he went to the front of the cave and looked out and watched for Baby Jesus. The stars were still twinkling and whispering their secret and St. Joseph listened and heard them saying: "Baby Jesus is coming! Baby Jesus is coming!"

The big bell in Bethlehem was still booming: "No room! No room!" but all the little bells on the hills were tinkling so softly and so sweetly: "Baby Jesus is coming! Baby Jesus is coming!" And the great white Angel, who had first brought the wonderful message, flew through the air on his strong bright wings and stood over the cave and he too sang: "Baby Jesus is coming! Baby Jesus is coming!" And St. Joseph fell on his knees and prayed, for he knew that Baby Jesus was God.

And all was quite silent for a moment: the stars stopped whispering and the bells stopped tinkling and the big Angel stopped singing and a bright golden light filled the cave and Baby Jesus came. . . .

And Our Lady took Him in Her arms and kissed Him and loved Him and laid Him in the manger on the straw.

VII. THE NATIVITY

The children might begin by going in procession to the Crib, singing:

> Come, come, come to the Manger,
> Children come, to the children's King,
> Sing, sing, sweet band of Angels,
> Stars of morning o'er Bethlehem sing.
> (*Arundel Collection*, No. 43, trans. by Fr. Caswell.)

Then they all gather round the Crib and repeat several times: "Baby Jesus I love You," and something else of their own, just as each one likes; let them return to their places singing.

Whilst the whole class is occupied with some kind of handwork, take groups of eight or ten at a time, to pay visits to the crib. They are going to talk to Baby Jesus and to do something for Him, *e.g.* smooth the straw or straighten the yew, etc. Make the visit as simple as possible—a talk to Baby Jesus and Holy Mary about themselves or about their homes or about Bethlehem, ending with: "Baby Jesus, bless us," and the Sign of the Cross.

They should each make up something to say to Baby Jesus of their own.

VIII. THE SECOND HALF OF THE HAIL MARY

Show a picture of Our Lady with the Infant Jesus on Her knee.

(As well as one big picture, it is often a help to distribute small coloured pictures among the class, so that every two children see one quite close. They must be taught to treat them reverently.)

Get the babies to say who the beautiful Lady is—Mary—Holy Mary. And who is Her little Son? Jesus—Baby Jesus.

(Call Our Lady "Holy Mary" throughout the lesson, for the sake of repetition.)

Holy Mary is the Mother of Baby Jesus and Baby Jesus is God—Holy Mary is the Mother of God.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God!" She likes us to call Her that. She is smiling and asking Baby Jesus to bless us.

Let us say it again, very softly: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us."

Let six go together and kneel at the Crib and say: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us;" (till the whole class has been).

I wonder if She is praying for us *now?* Yes, She is! Look at your picture and tell Her you know She is praying for us *Now.*

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us

sinners, *Now*." Lay no stress on the word "sinners." Children of five are not sinners. In the same way, no stress need be made on the words, "at the hour of our death." They can be taught by repetition, as in a story, like the following, or otherwise.

A STORY TO TEACH THE WORDS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE HAIL MARY

Once upon a time there were three brothers, their names were Francis, Antony, and Bernard.

One day, when they were out walking, they came to a spot where three roads met, and they saw in front of them a little Angel. Where he stood a sunbeam had fallen and it made him look quite golden.

"Where are you going, Francis?" said the Angel.

Francis thought for a moment; he had never been spoken to by an Angel before, at least if he had he did not remember it; but he answered quite nicely: "Dear Angel, I was going down the road to the right, but I think now, I should like to go with you instead."

"Not just yet," said the Angel, "and Antony, where are you going to?"

"Dear Angel, I was going down the road to the left, but I will go wherever you tell me."

"Very good," said the Angel, "and Bernard, where are you going to?"

Bernard answered: "Dear Angel, I was going to keep on the road I am on now, but I will go wherever you say."

"That is quite right," said the Angel, "now listen. I have been sent to you by Holy Mary," and as the Angel said Holy Mary's name his wings seemed to tremble with brightness, and he bowed his head and looked so happy, because She was his Queen. "She has sent me to tell you to come to Her Palace. There She is waiting for you. So go straight on along the middle of the road, and whenever you want help say the 'Holy Mary.' If you do that you will get to the Palace of the Queen."

And as the little Angel said the last words, he spread his wings and was gone, and the sunbeam went with him.

The three brothers started on their journey —they were very grateful to the Angel, but he had flown away so quickly that they had not had time to say "Thank you."

They had not gone very far when they heard the howling of a wolf, and they were all three, very much afraid.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God," said Bernard.

"Pray for us sinners," said Francis.

"Now and at the hour of our death," said Antony.

They said it three times (repeat) and at the third time the howling had stopped, and the wolf had trotted off to find his dinner somewhere else.

On they went, thanking "Holy Mary" very much, but soon after that they came to a deep river. There was nothing but water in front of them and no bridge across. They did not know how to swim, so there was nothing to be done but to say "Holy Mary" over again.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God," said Bernard.

"Pray for us sinners," said Francis.

"Now and at the hour of our death, Amen," said Antony.

This time they went on saying it, over and over again (repeat). Still no boat came to fetch them and the water seemed to get deeper and deeper and it cut straight across the road.

"Suppose we went round by this wood?" said Antony.

"No," said Francis, "the Angel said we were to keep straight on."

"We have not said 'Holy Mary' often enough," said Bernard. And he began again: "Holy Mary, Mother of God."

"Pray for us sinners," said Francis.

"Now and at the hour of our death," said Antony.

Suddenly they saw at the opposite side of the river a golden sunbeam, and a minute later, the little Angel was standing on it beckoning to them to come across.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God," said Bernard, and he plunged into the river.

"Pray for us sinners," said Francis, as he tumbled into the water after him.

"Now and at the hour of our death," said Antony, who could not bear to be left behind.

How they got to the opposite side they never knew, but somehow or other they found themselves quite safely there, and their clothes were not even wet!

Holy Mary and the little Angel knew all about it, you may be sure. But when they looked round the little Angel flew away and the sunbeam went after him.

On they went along the road as before, wondering what would happen next and hoping they would see the beautiful Palace soon, but there was no sign of it and they were getting very tired, and once they all but stopped. What would have happened if they had, I cannot tell, for the Angel had told them to go on without stopping. So instead of stopping they said "Holy Mary" again (repeat), and after that they did not feel so tired.

Just then Antony touched Bernard's arm and said: "Look!" and Francis almost shouted, "Oh, look!" and Bernard jumped,

and he too said: "Look!" for there in front of them, sparkling in the bright sun, stood the most beautiful Palace they had ever dreamt of. There were lovely gates in front, all bright shining gold, and strong tall towers, made of silver, glittering with diamonds on either side of the gates, and at the top of each tower stood a beautiful tall Angel with folded wings, watching and guarding the Palace of the Queen.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, let us in," said Bernard.

"That is not what you must say," said Francis.

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners."

"Now and at the hour of our death, Amen," said Antony.

And as they said it, the two tall Angels flew from the Towers to the Gates, one with white wings, the other with blue, bearing in their arms a beautiful Cross. They touched the Gates with the Cross, and the golden gates flew open, and there was their own little Angel standing in his sunbeam, and as they looked the sunbeam grew longer and longer till it reached the spot where Bernard, Francis and Antony were kneeling and they saw then that the sunbeam was really a golden ladder, and the little Angel beckoned and they all three ran up the golden steps, on and on, higher

and higher, until at last, they reached the beautiful room, where Holy Mary was.

And the golden gates shut behind them and the two Angels kept watch on the Towers as before.

IX. The SHEPHERDS*

1. Tell the story of the shepherds—who they were—give them names—introduce several little shepherd boys among them.

2. What they were doing—watching—looking after some of the sheep—sleeping—keeping up fire—its red light, etc.

3. Suddenly an Angel stood close by, on grass—describe.

4. "Fear not—go to Bethlehem—there you will find Baby Jesus and Holy Mary." (The Gospel words are too difficult.)

5. Rows of Angels in the sky—describe each row, in a different colour. The lovely singing: "Joy! Joy! Joy in Heaven and on earth. Peace and Joy!" †

6. The Shepherds' conversation: "Let us go and see Baby Jesus and Holy Mary."

7. They come with their sheep and lambs. What Holy Mary and St. Joseph say to them.

* Luke ii., 8-18.

† Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures "The Angel Choir" No. 140. Price unmounted 8d. each: with a metal rim at top and bottom 1s. 9d. each.

DRAMATISATION

1. Divide the class into Angels, Shepherds and Sheep.

Sheep learn to ba-a-a-a.

The Shepherds say it is very cold and gather round the fire: (an inverted stool, with a bit of red paper on it.) They wonder why the stars are so bright. Angel appears.

(An Angel's dress is very quickly manufactured out of two bits of an old muslin curtain, on a little white foundation. Throw one bit, twice the length of the child's height, over one shoulder and the other bit, over the other. Let the muslin fall quite freely; no stitching, merely a pin to keep the muslin over shoulders. A pair of paper wings completes the whole).

The Angel says: "Go to Bethlehem: Holy Mary and Baby Jesus want you."

The Shepherds fall on their knees.

The other Angels appear, standing on a low bench. Help them to sing:

> "List a secret we would tell,
> God has come with you to dwell."

or simply: "Joy, joy! Peace and Joy!" or any other very simple words.

Scene II. THE SHEPHERDS GO TO THE CAVE

1. The Angels go first and kneel round it.
2. The Shepherds talk a little about

(a) Angels (b) what they said: (c) what it means. They make up their minds to go to the cave.

3. They go there, two by two, singing: "Come, come, come to the Manger" or anything else preferred. The Sheep follow very quietly.

They can bring paper toys or anything else they like as presents for Baby Jesus. They lay these down in front of the Crib and say:

"All our love to You we bring,
Take it, bless us little King!"

or any other prayer. "Jesus, we love You," repeated several times, is a very good one.

X. THE STORY OF THE WISE MEN*

1. Just about the time when Baby Jesus was born, there lived far away from Bethlehem, three very Wise Men. They were very rich, as well as very wise, and best of all, they were very good.

These three Wise Men were very fond of looking at the stars; and every evening when it began to grow dark the three Wise Men would go out-of-doors and stand watching for the stars to come out too. They never had to wait very long before first one star and then another and then a great number would shine out quite brightly, and the three Wise Men

* Matt. ii., 1-12.

tried to find out all they could about them. The stars seemed to tell them a great deal about God and about the beautiful things He had made, and the three Wise Men grew wiser and wiser every day.

One day they went out as usual to watch for the stars, when suddenly, without any warning, there stood flashing in the sky a most beautiful star—far more beautiful than any the three Wise Men had seen before. It was of a lovely deep blue colour, and it sent out such long rays of light that they fell on the hearts of the three Wise Men, and made them love God. "What does it mean?" said the first Wise Man.

"What can it mean?" said the second Wise Man.

"Let us wait and see," said the third Wise Man, and he was the wisest of them all. So they all three waited and watched and wondered. Now this Star was Baby Jesus's own star, and the three Wise Men knew that some day Baby Jesus was to come, and this beautiful star told them that He had come, and that He wanted the three Wise Men to come to His Court.

This message made the three Wise Men very glad, and they at once set out on their journey, and Baby Jesus's Star travelled on in front of them and sent its long bright rays down on the path they were to follow.

Tell in story form: (a) The journey and arrival at the city of a wicked king.

(b) Their stay in the city: "Where is He, the Baby King? Where was He born?" (The children will love being able to answer this question).

(c) Their arrival at Bethlehem and the offering of the presents to the Great King, Baby Jesus. (Describe the reappearance of Baby Jesus's Star, very dramatically.) Show a coloured print of Burne Jones's picture: "The Star of Bethlehem."

The story of the Epiphany lends itself easily to dramatisation, and a great deal can be made out of the three gifts the children each choose to take with them for the Baby King.

Not more than a word need be said about the killing of little children by the wicked king: it was very sad, but the little ones were glad to die for Baby Jesus, and He has given them a beautiful Heaven ever since!

The flight into Egypt can be told in simple story form or left till next year.

Play: A MOMENT OF SILENCE TO LISTEN FOR THE CHILD JESUS

1. Obtain from the children that real "immobility" of which Madame Montessori speaks in her "Handbook."

Show the children how to sit absolutely still, "with feet still, body still, arms still, head still."

2. Either half-darken the room or get the children to close their eyes. Teach them how to listen for all the little sounds which they can hear in the absolute silence: and then say: "I'll be Our Lady and call you one by one."

3. Go behind the Crib and whisper each name, so softly that the child has to listen attentively to hear it.

When called, he rises and finds his way to the crib: he must walk so lightly as to make no noise, and when he reaches the Crib he says the Holy Name very softly. When they are thus all round the Crib, make them sing something to the Infant Jesus.

The passage in Madame Montessori's Handbook, of which this is an adaptation, is well worth a careful reading.*

The Crib at this age is the best centre for the little one's devotion, and should hold a prominent position throughout the year: that is one reason why it is important to have a permanent Crib in the class-room.

* "Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook" by Maria Montessori, London, William Heinemann, p. 75 to p. 79.

Material for short informal talks about Our Lord, Our Lady, and the Saints.

(These suggestions, if taken, should be developed).

1. St. Joseph would sometimes say, when Our Lord was a little boy at Nazareth: "Jesus, come here. I want you."

What do you think Our Lord would do? What must we do? etc.

Our Lady may have said: "Jesus, fetch me that little cup," etc.

2. Our Lord and Our Lady and St. Joseph were very poor: so sometimes they were hungry.

You see Our Lord was thinking of us, and he knew that sometimes we should be hungry too: and He wanted to feel the same as we do: so, if ever we are hungry we can say: "Jesus was hungry too," etc.

3. Our Lady used to go early every morning to fetch water. Our Lord used to go with her to carry the empty jug. Coming back again, Our Lady carried it, because it was too heavy for Our Lord.

Our Lord used always to carry something for St. Joseph when they went to work together.

Can you carry anything for Mother?

4. The Workshop. Neither Our Lady nor St. Joseph liked things left on the floor. Sometimes when St. Joseph was working,

shavings of wood (show some) would fall, and even when Our Lord was as small as you, He would pick them up and make a heap of them, and then His Mother would throw them away, so that everything might be nice and tidy.

You can do the same with bits of paper, etc., at home, and it will help Mother very much.

5. Our Lady's love of flowers.—Our Lord so often picks them for Her. We can sometimes pick daisies and buttercups and give them to Our Lady; some day we will make a daisy chain for Her.

In summer the sun was very hot where Our Lord lived, and the poor flowers died for want of water, but Our Lord used to water those He wanted for Our Lady, so as to keep them fresh, etc.

6. Our Lord played with many little boys and girls—sometimes in the fields—sometimes in the streets. He was so kind to all—so gentle—so full of love, that everyone loved Him, etc.

7. When Our Lord was small like you, He used to say His prayers, sometimes at His Mother's knee, sometimes alone. We must try and play like Him.

What do we pray for?

8. One day, when Our Lord was no longer a little Boy, but a big grown-up Man, He

saw a poor man, who could only use one hand and arm—he could not move the other at all, and it was the right hand he could not use, so that made it all the worse, and Our Lord was sorry for him. So He told him to stand up so that everyone could see him (there were a great many people there), and Our Lord said: "Stretch out your hand." That was just what he could not do (show by gesture), but when Our Lord told him, he stretched it out at once, and after that he could use both hands and arms, just as you can. Our Lord is always so kind when we can't do things—He always wants to help us.

Think how glad the poor man was!

(Any miracle of Our Lord can be told in simple fashion, except the raising from the dead—more suitable later—the cases of diabolical possession, and also perhaps those of leprosy).

9. Many little incidents which are neither miracles nor parables—such as Zacheus in the sycamore tree—Our Lord in Martha's house —Our Lord riding into Jerusalem, accompanied by the shouts of joy from the children, etc., furnish matter for conversation, provided they are very simply dealt with.

10. Many verses of hymns can form the basis of a little conversation—*e.g.*, "Jesus, gentlest Shepherd" (a discussion on "white

sheep," "black sheep," "lost sheep," etc.), or again:

"As men to their gardens
Go to seek sweet flowers,
In our hearts, dear Jesus
Seeks them at all hours," etc.

"Dear Angel ever at my side . . . etc.

11. The stories and emblems of the Saints will, if carefully chosen, furnish matter for conversation: *e.g.*, St. Agnes and her lamb, St. Dorothy and her fruits and flowers, the shamrock, etc.

Our Lord Blessing Little Children

Tell the little ones in very simple words how Our Lord loves us all—how when He was on earth He loved everyone He spoke to or who spoke to Him, but that there were some whom He seemed to love better than others, and among these were little children, such as they are now.

Make the following come home, by repetition, by actions, and by pictures:—

Our Lord used to lay His Hands on the heads of little children who came to Him or who were carried to Him in their mothers' arms. Our Lord used to say a prayer over them and bless them.—(Matt. xix., 13-15).

Our Lord used to tell those who stood round, and who saw Him do this, that Heaven was full of little children like those He had just blest.

Our Lord used to put His arm round them. He took them on His knee, and their mothers used to bring them to Him, that He might just touch them with His Hand: they knew what a precious thing it would be for them if He did.

And Our Lord never refused. He loved to have His little ones near Him.—(Mark x., 13).

One day when there were many little ones round Our Lord, and the grown-up people wanted Him to send the children away that they might talk to Him instead, Our Lord called one little boy to Him and held him between His knees, turning him round to the grown-up people, that they might all see him, and He said: "Do you see this little child? He is good, obedient and gentle, and unless you are like him, you will not get into Heaven at all." Then He kissed that little boy, and sent him off to play with the others.

(See too p. 103).

(End of First Year's Course.)

SECOND YEAR'S COURSE

I. GOD THE FATHER MADE EVERYTHING

1. *God the Father made everything.* A picture of a loving father at home—who does so much for his children—loves them—is kind, etc. Many examples—*e.g.* their breakfast this morning—who bought it for them?

But, who made it. Go into details—Who made the milk, the flour for the bread, etc.? God—God is our Father too.

Contrast the love of our father at home with the love of our Father in Heaven. The gifts of our father on earth—our Heavenly Father's gifts. Contrast kindness, goodness, etc.

2. *What God our Father has done for us.* Once there was no light on the earth—all dark—dark—dark, and God the Father knew we should want light, and so He made a beautiful sun and hung it in the sky, to give us light. We turn away from it at night, because God our Father wants us to sleep, and we sleep better in the dark, but every morning it comes back and gives us light. God our Father made the sun. He made the evening and the morning, the stars and the moon, etc. He made our beautiful country, hills, mountains,

fields and flowers. He made the sea, rivers, snow, ice, rain, etc. He made the animals, the tiger and the lamb, etc.

3. Go through some of the other works of Creation, as simply as possible.

Get the children to suggest some and then supplement.

4. *Why did God do all this?* He did not want any of those things for Himself. He had His own beautiful Heaven, and none of these were half as beautiful as what He had there. He did not want any of them but He did want *us*.

He wanted you N—— and *you* and *you*, each of you . . . but He had to make sure that we each of us love Him, before He could have us with Him in Heaven, where He wants us to be. He will not have us there, unless we want to come. And so He made a home for us first on earth, where we could show Him that we want Him too.

This beautiful earth, with all God's gifts on it, is to be our home for a short time, until He calls us to Heaven.

He made all these things because He wants us to be happy even here.

Go over some of them again, getting children to suggest as many as possible. Dwell on the thought of God's love in each.

II. GOD OUR FATHER CAN DO EVERYTHING

1. Sometimes we ask our father at home to do something for us, and he says: "I can't."

What does he mean? That he is not able to.

God our Heavenly Father could never say, "I can't," because there is nothing good He cannot do. We know that He made everything, quite easily, out of nothing. When you ask your mother to make you a cake she cannot make it out of nothing: she needs flour and sugar and currants, and she can't make these: God did that.

2. A big strong man can carry heavy things, but he soon has to stop, and if they are very big and heavy, he cannot even move them, but God can move the mountains and even this big earth, without feeling any weight at all, more easily than you can move a feather.

There is nothing good that God cannot do, and that He will not do for each one of you if you ask Him.

Show the children some pictures of *e.g.* a storm at sea—the Falls of Niagara—the huge trees of the American forests—lions and tigers —anything that shows God's power strikingly, and get the thought well driven home: "God did that—He could do it a thousand times over—He made it all out of nothing."

3. *The God Who can do all things is my Friend.* A Friend Who can never say: "I can't." A Friend Who will never refuse me. A Friend Who loves me more than all my other friends put together.

If we could add all the love of our earthly father and mother, brothers, sisters, etc., till we had used up all the love there is in the whole big world, we should not have as great a heap of love as God's love for each of us. It would look such a tiny little heap beside the great mountain of God's love.

When we want to give beautiful presents to those we love, we are often stopped because we are not rich enough: that is never true of God.

We just ask Him for all we want. He listens to every word we say and then sends us what we ask for.

Is it not a happy thing to have for our best Friend, our strong God, Who can do everything?

N.B.—In speaking to the whole class, do not suggest the idea that prayer sometimes remains unanswered. As a matter of fact, when we ask in the real spirit of Christ, and with full confidence, we can always get what we ask for: our Lord says so and the Saints verify it.

When an individual child says he has prayed for something and not got it, explain

to him that perhaps his prayer had not enough faith in it—or perhaps he was asking for something selfish, and then of course he *could* not have enough faith: add, that when we ask for "temporal" things (*e.g.* fine weather), it is generally better to ask for it conditionally, on its being good for us and God's Will.

III. GOD OUR FATHER KNOWS AND SEES EVERYTHING

1. There are many things I might ask you and you would have to say, "I don't know." And there are many things you might ask me and I should have to answer, "I don't know."

You might ask me: "How is it that if a little seed is put into the ground, a beautiful flower grows up from it?" (Show seed and flower). And I should say, "I don't know. God made the seed and the flower but I don't know how they grow."

And you might ask me, "How is it that the sheep gets wool on its back and the bird gets feathers?" (Show pictures). I should have to say: "I don't know. I know God made the sheep and the birds like that but I don't know how He did it or how the wool and the feathers grow."

And you might ask me (make a little child and a bigger one stand for a moment side by

side), "How is it that I am growing bigger every day?" And I should have to give you the same answer: "I don't know. I know all children grow bigger as they grow older and I know God makes them grow, but how He does it, I don't know."

And then you might become tired of asking me questions and of always hearing that I don't know and you might take the same questions to someone else, someone whom people said was very wise and knew a great many things, but he would give you the same answer. "My child," he would say, "I don't know." And then you might ask, "Who knows? Who can tell me?" And he would answer, "God. He knows everything. He knows how He does all these wonderful things, but He has not told us, and He alone knows."

And so there is no question that we could ask God He does not know the answer to. He knows everything and everybody and He never forgets. He knows you and me and all we are thinking of, inside our heads: all we do when we are quite alone. He loves us so much that He cannot bear to have us out of His sight, and so He is always watching to do all He can to make us happy.

If we go into the dark we cannot see, but there is no darkness for God—He sees everything—all we want—all that hurts us, etc. All we keep secret, shut away from others, God

sees it all. All through our dark night He is watching us and He never forgets.

God is like a beautiful Sun always shining on us. Wherever we go the light shines into our hearts and shows God everything there.

Sometimes we have a little secret which we don't tell anybody: we keep it shut up inside our hearts quite tight. It may be a good little secret or it may not be quite so good: and we say to ourselves, "Nobody knows that—nobody but *me*." That is never true: we must say to ourselves: "Nobody knows that except God and I." He will always help us in all our secrets, if we ask Him.

It is a good thing sometimes, *e.g.* just before prayers—to have a little exercise of realising the Presence of God.

The question, reverently asked, "Who is in this room?" each answer followed by, "Some One else," may attain the end; or a moment's perfect silence (see p. 46); or a repetition of the words, "God is here," "God sees me," "God is loving me," etc.

IV. THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE*

This could be dramatised up to the taking of the Apple, but not further.

* Genesis iii., 1-24.

After the description of the garden, the story falls naturally into a series of duologues: and this is the only practical dramatic form.

(a) Duologue between Adam and Eve, all joy and delight—flowers and fruit, etc., spoken of.

(b) Between Eve and the Serpent.

(c) Between Adam and Eve again, till the Voice of God is heard calling to them.

Make the children realise that the Serpent is the Devil, bent on doing great harm to both Adam and Eve.

After this, on to the end, make everything as hushed and reverent as possible. God's displeasure; Adam's fear; the attempt of Adam and Eve to excuse their sin, their failure, and then the awful punishment, pain, labour, death; the driving out from Paradise —the bitter grief of Adam and Eve.

What has happened? *Sin.* Wrong-doing—doing what makes God displeased—what He hates.

What has happened to Adam and Eve? Contrast between: "Before and After."

What has happened to the Earth? Another contrast. God's work was all spoilt.

What was God going to do? He was going to make it all right again, and in the most beautiful way possible.

He chose to send His only Son Jesus, into the world, as He was the only One who could make it all right.

He was to come, as you know, as a little Baby, and then grow up to be a man, and for love of Him God would love all men again.

But as we have just seen in Adam and Eve, pain and punishment *must* come after sin.

And as God was very much displeased at the sin of Adam and Eve He said no man, woman, or child should get to Heaven unless Jesus, His only Son, died for them.

Jesus came, He lived on earth for thirty years, and then He died in great pain on the Cross, to make that big sin all right again.

And so you and I can get to Heaven and no one can stop us. Only one thing can shut the big gates against us again, and that is our own big sin which we need never do, and please God we never shall.

But even if we did sin, though we must pray every day not to, Our Lord will make that all right too if we ask Him.

V. CALVARY THE CRUCIFIX

Early in the year show the children a Crucifix (a fairly large one).

Make them understand:

(1). That it is the same Jesus Who was born in Bethlehem—Jesus Who is God.

(2). That wicked men put Him to death, but that He let them do it because He loves each

one of us so much that He died for us—to make up for sin.

(3). Answer all their questions.

(4). Teach them from the very beginning to treat the Crucifix with the greatest love and reverence.

N.B.—Do *not* tell the children that *they* put Him to death. It is not true since none of them have committed mortal sin, and it is a statement which no child can understand.

A little boy of five once asked: "Who put the nails in?" and his Mother injudiciously answered: "You, Philip, you put them in." A little later she found him on the floor with the Crucifix on his knees, having managed to detach the plaster Figure.

"Philip has taken them out," he said. "Philip never meant to put them in."

But for years after he puzzled over her words.

VI. THE OUR FATHER

There are six points here which require careful teaching:

1. Hallowed.
2. Thy Kingdom.
3. Thy Will be done.
4. Our daily bread.
5. Trespasses and forgiveness.
6. Temptation.

Make sure that the children have definite, if incomplete, ideas about these six headings.

It is quite wrong merely to teach the words by rote and let them get into a mechanical habit of recitation.

Even if they already understand them, it is well to go over them from time to time.

1. *Hallowed.* If we said of anyone that they were strong and wise and kind and loving we should be said to *praise* them.

Who is as strong and wise, etc., as God?

Therefore we praise our good God. Just as when we hear our earthly father's name we think of him with love, so too with God.

There is another word which means praise which we keep for God's special praise—that is "hallowed."

Teach the new word in the usual way and get children to repeat:

"Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name."

2. Draw a picture of God as the King of Kings. His Kingdom, the whole earth and the whole Heavens.

How we should treat any king.

How the King of Kings.

All do not do this, therefore we pray: "Thy Kingdom come!"

God wants the little kingdom of our hearts . . . How shall we treat the King of Kings? . . . love . . . honour . . . obey.

3. *Thy Will be done.* Link on to the obedience suggested above. The children know nothing about the human will, but they understand what is meant when someone is asked, "Will you do that?" and the answer is, "I will," or "I won't."

In the first case a promise is made to do what is asked, and so what we mean when we say "Thy Will be done" is, that God asks us to do things for Him and we answer: "Yes, I will." Also, we want everybody else to give the same answer to God. "Will you do it?"

"Yes, I will, Lord. Thy Will be done."

4. *Our daily bread.* Bread stands for all we want in this world. All comes from our Heavenly Father . . . etc.

Allude to another Bread which they will learn more about very soon. A Bread which Our Lord alone can give them, and which is HIMSELF.

5. *Forgive us our Trespasses, etc.*

(a) When we tell Mother or Father that we are sorry and they answer: "It is all right now." That means they forgive. Apply to children's sorrow towards God and His forgiveness. It is then all right.

(b) *Trespasses.* A big word for sin, wrong-doing. Exemplify by some childish fault—temper, disobedience.

(c) "*As we forgive them that trespass against us.*"

Just as we want to be "all right" when we have asked God's pardon, so must we make it "all right" when our brothers or sisters or companions say they are sorry. We must "make it up" and forget all about it, and we do this even if they have forgotten to say they are sorry. If we do, then God forgives us everything.

The story of St. Nicephorus might be told with effect. The facts are as follows, and they can be easily adapted to suit the capacity of the class. They would also dramatise well.

Sapricius and Nicephorus were great friends and loved one another like brothers, but one day they quarrelled, and after that they would not speak to one another. Nicephorus, realising that this was very wrong, sent three different sets of friends to Sapricius to beg him to forgive him. But it was no use. Then he went himself and threw himself at the feet of Sapricius, saying: "Forgive me!" but Sapricius would not.

Persecution broke out against the Christians and Sapricius confessed the Faith and was led out to die. On the way, Nicephorus again threw himself at his feet, saying, "O Martyr of Christ, forgive me!"

Sapricius was again silent, but when he reached the place of persecution, he turned round to the executioner and said, "Strike not, I will deny Christ."

Nicephorus cried to him, "O my brother, do not lose the crown so nearly won!"

But Sapricius was as obstinate in his apostasy as he had been in hatred of his brother. Perseverance was not for him but for Nicephorus, who immediately confessed he was a Christian and received the martyr's crown.

6. *Temptation.* It is a happy thing to do what God wants, and yet sometimes we feel that we should like to do something else. For instance, we see a nice box of sweets on the table and we feel that we should like to take it. It is not ours, and we know we ought not to take anything that does not belong to us. We *want* the sweets, and we do what *we* want. We know it is naughty, and if the nice box had not been on the table we should not have thought about it, but it looked so nice and so sweet, it *tempted* us—made us feel how much we should like it. We might have turned our back and walked away, that was what God wanted, but instead we did what *we* wanted and put it into our pocket and went away and ate it. Therefore we say very earnestly, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."

"*Evil*" means all harm, everything that hurts us. The greatest evil is sin—wrong-doing.

Explain simply the evils of poverty, of sickness, etc., but dwell a little on the fact that

wrong-doing is the greatest of all evils, and that we shall be very rich and very well in Heaven, etc.

After these or similar explanations the children should say the Our Father daily, slowly and reverently, sitting, standing or kneeling, it does not matter which.

Take from time to time one or other of the petitions and talk it over with the class in a simple, homely manner so that the children may get more and more into the habit of connecting *some* thought with one or other of the words.

A habit of mere mechanical repetition is to be avoided at all costs.

When the words are quite familiar, vary this repetition by putting different pictures before the class, *e.g.*, the Crucifixion, the Crib, etc., talk a little about the picture, then say with the children the "Our Father," getting them to fix their eyes on the picture and think a little about it whilst they are saying the prayer.

It is better to divide a large class into sections for this. The rest can make daisy-chains for Our Lady, or cut out little blue or red flags to carry in a Procession, or make a paper basket to hold a few little flowers to offer to the Sacred Heart, etc., etc.

VII. THE FIRST HALF OF THE HAIL MARY

1. Recall the story of the Annunciation and how Our Lady was called "full of grace."

Obtain reasons.

Why did the Angel say, "The Lord is with thee?"

If there is any difficulty in answering, recall Bethlehem, etc., God is always with Mary and Jesus, who is God, is with her too. Get the children to say several times, in front of Our Lady's picture, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee."

A procession to Our Lady might then be made, each child presenting one flower (a daisy will do), and repeating the words. The little flags can be carried when the flowers are not obtainable.

*2. Tell how Our Lady, when she heard the good news that Baby Jesus was coming, went to tell her cousin all about it.

Give name and awaken interest in the "Lizzies," etc., of the class. Describe the scene of the two cousins meeting. Explain St. Elizabeth's words, "You, dear Mary, are blessed more than all other women, and blessed too is your son, Jesus."

* Luke i., 39-56.

Your Mother at home is very blessed in having you as her child, but think how blessed Mary was in having Jesus, the very God, as her Son!

A recapitulation might be made by dividing the children into two bands—the Angel's band and St. Elizabeth's band.

The first band to go to Our Lady's Statue and say, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." And St. Elizabeth's band to follow and complete the salutation.

Finally, the next day the bands could change places, so that if the words are not already known they will be learnt.

VIII. GOD THE HOLY GHOST SPEAKS TO PEOPLE IN THEIR HEARTS

"The Holy Ghost" is not an easy lesson to give to children. You want to give them the idea of the Supreme Spirit, and yet this idea must be concreted somehow, or the children will not grasp it.

The following notes may help.

1. Compare with what our Angel Guardian

does to help us. He whispers to us to be good, keep us out of harm's way, etc.

So to the Holy Ghost whispers to our hearts, and we must listen to what He says and do it.

*2. A very simple talk about the visit which Nicodemus, a friend of Our Lord, paid Him by night.

Picture the room—the light of one little lamp, etc. Why this friend came by night—What did they talk about?†

Heaven where Our Lord had always lived and where he had come from only a few years before.

God Who dwelt in Heaven—God the Father Who made us all—God the Son who had come on earth and was now talking to His friend. And God the Holy Ghost of Whom Nicodemus knew nothing.

So Our Lord told him that the Holy Ghost spoke to Him often in his heart and told him what to do to be good.

Our Lord said that when the Holy Ghost spoke, it was like a soft gentle wind blowing among the trees in summer time. If Nicodemus did not listen he would not hear it, but if he listened well he would hear the Holy Ghost speaking to his heart and telling him

* John iii., 1-21.

† Nelson's Bible Wall Series, "Jesus and Nicodemus," No. 224.

what to do. And Nicodemus listened and the Holy Ghost told him not to be afraid but to be proud that he was Our Lord's friend, and Nicodemus heard, and after that he was never afraid again.

3. Another way in which this lesson could be taken would be to tell the story of Our Lord's Baptism, as we have in it a visible representation of the Blessed Trinity; but the Baptism requires much explanation, and presents so many difficulties that, on the whole, it is probably better left till later and will serve for revision of the above doctrine next year.

*4. The story of Elias very simply told.

(a) There lived once, many years ago, a holy man called Elias, who was very strong, very wise, and a great friend of God. And there was in those days a wicked Queen called Jezabel who hated Elias, because he told her how wicked she was, and Jezabel made up her mind to kill him.

Elias was afraid, and he thought he had better run away before the wicked Queen caught him. He ran for a long time till he was very tired and then he lay down under a big tree and fell asleep. And God knew that he was not only tired but hungry, so He sent an Angel to him with a cake and some water, and the Angel woke Elias and told him to rise and eat.

* III Kings xix., 1-19.

Elias ate up the whole cake and drank all the water and then fell asleep again, for he was still very tired. And God let him sleep a long time and then the Angel came back with another cake and some more water and Elias awoke and ate it all, and when he had finished, the Angel told him to go to a certain mountain, which was a long way off, and that he was to live in a cave there, and that there the Holy Ghost would speak to him.

(b) Elias did just what the Angel said, and after walking a long time he came to the cave and lived there.

And one day a gentle Voice said: "What are you doing here, Elias?" and Elias knew that the Voice was the Voice of God, and he answered humbly and reverently, telling of the wickedness of Queen Jezabel, and how he had run away from her.

And the Voice told him to go out of the cave and stand upon the mountain and there the Holy Ghost would speak to him again. And Elias went forth out of the cave and stood upon the mountain. And a great storm of wind arose, so great that all the mountain shook and some of the rocks were broken in pieces. But Elias knew that the Holy Ghost would not speak to him in a storm like this, so he stood quite still and waited, and the storm did him no harm.

It was soon over and then came a great fire,

so that all the mountain was one blaze, and it was very beautiful, though terrible, to look at. And Elias thought: "No, the Holy Ghost will not come till all is still."

(c) And then a gentle little whisper, as of a soft breeze! Elias had on a big mantle and when he heard the gentle breeze, he buried his face in it and was afraid, because he knew that the Holy Ghost was going to speak and the Holy Ghost is God. And the Holy Ghost spoke to Elias in a soft low voice and He told him not to be afraid, for the wicked Queen would not be able to touch him, but that she herself would be punished for all her past deeds.

So Elias was comforted and he went back to his own country and worked hard for God, doing all that the Holy Ghost told him. And the wicked Queen Jezabel was punished for all her bad deeds and died miserably.

A fitting close to these lessons would be to teach the children the *Gloria Patri*.

Glory means praise, and with a little encouragement it will be easy to obtain reasons why we should praise God the Father (creation, love, etc.). God the Son (born in a stable—love, etc.). God the Holy Ghost (because He speaks to me in my heart, will never leave me, etc.). Glory be to the three Persons in one God.

Repeat the words.

There has always been glory to God, there is glory to God, there always will be glory to God.

Teach by repetition accompanied by stress on meaning, as for other prayers.

The Shamrock, used by St. Patrick to teach the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, is a very helpful illustration.

IX. HEAVEN

1. A reference to the *Gloria Patri* and a little conversation on "World without end."

That place is called Heaven and it is the place to which we are all going. We are not going to stay here always. You have heard people talk about death. "So and so has died." It happens every day, many times a day.

What does death mean? It means that we leave this earth and go to God—and God asks: "Do you love me?" Then He looks into our heart and if He sees the answer is "Yes," He takes us in His arms, away from this world, and bears us to Heaven. And there we shall get such a grand surprise.

Get some examples of the things the children like very much—a holiday—a Christmas Tree—a day in the country—or at the seaside, etc.

Get from them, that because all these things are so nice, it is a pity that they should come to an end. Obtain that they all *do* come to an end—everything does.

2. *Speak of Heaven as a beautiful home* where we shall live for *ever*. We shall be so happy, we could not be happier, and it will *never* come to an end. When we have been there a thousand years we shall not be any nearer the end than when we first came.

Sometimes we say sadly of the holidays: "Oh, they are nearly over now!"

We shall never say that of Heaven—it will never be "nearly over." It will go on *for ever and for ever*.

3. *What is Heaven like?* We do not know: it is so beautiful, so happy, that we cannot even imagine it. Our Lord at the Last Supper was talking of Heaven to His Apostles: He had been there, so He knew what it was like; but He was the only one Who did: He did not tell them what it was like: only that He was going to leave them and go back there.

This made them very sad, and to console them He told them that He was going to prepare a place for them in Heaven.

And He is preparing a place for us, too—to give us such a surprise: when we see our beautiful home we shall hardly be able to believe it

is meant for us—but He will give it to us, and it will be our very own for *ever*.

4. *Whom shall we see in Heaven?* God—the great, beautiful God—Who loves us, and Whom we love—Our Blessed Lord—God made Man—all beauty and sweetness—so glad to welcome us, and we so glad to see Him—Our Blessed Lady, our own dear Mother Mary and St. Joseph, and so many people we have loved, whilst we were here on earth—now all so beautiful—but we shall know them all, and love them all, and have *everything* we want, everything we like and love, and we shall have it *for ever*.

(The principle: "If you want it you will have it: if you would like to do it, you will be able to:" is, of course, absolutely true, and is perhaps the best way of answering children's questions and desires concerning Heaven).

X. THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

We were talking lately about Heaven, and how one thing we know for certain is, that we shall see Our Lord and Our Lady there: but Our Lord loved us so much that He could not bear to wait till we get to Heaven before He could have us near Him, so, when He knew that it was nearly time for Him to go to

Heaven He said to Himself: "I cannot leave them alone: I love them too much: besides what would they do without Me?"

So He did a wonderful thing—you know Our Lord is God, and He can do everything. He arranged that He would stay with us on earth, but not as He had been till then. He would come down from Heaven on our altars, whenever we wanted Him to.

Only His priests can get Him to come down like that: but they ask Him to come, every time they say *Mass.*

When you go to Church on Sunday, the Priest says Mass. It is at Mass that the priest asks Our Lord to come down, and He does so at once—always in the same wonderful way—like Bread and Wine.

It looks like Bread and Wine, but it is really Our Lord Himself.

This was a very special promise which He made when on earth, that whenever His priests ask Him, He will come immediately.

When the bell rings in the middle of Mass, it means "He is coming," and the next time it rings, it means: "He has come," and we must bow our heads and tell Him that we are glad to see Him: dear Lord Jesus, come down from Heaven, on to the altar for us.

What we must do at Mass.

1. We have a great deal to do: no time to look about or think of other things—we are

too busy. First we have to welcome Our Lord.

Exemplify by the way they greet a little friend they are glad to see. Jesus is our best Friend: so He, too, is welcome.

2. After we have told Our Lord several times that we love Him very much, we must thank Him for all the good things He has given us.

Get as many suggestions as possible.

3. The third thing we have to do is to tell Him about any little thing we have done wrong.

Suggest: going to bed without saying "good-night" to Jesus—temper—unkindness, etc.

4. And then the rest of the time we can ask for everything we want—never mind what it is.

Again get the children's suggestions and remind them to have a little talk with Our Lady, before they leave the Church.

XI. OUR LORD LIVES IN THE TABERNACLE

1. Go over the chief facts of last lesson then talk over the reasons why Our Lord does this, because He loves us and wants to stay with us.

Dwell on the fact that He does stay—day and night.

Speak, too, of the life Our Lord lives in the

Tabernacle :—waiting for us—praying for us —welcoming us—loving us.

Be careful not to encourage the idea that He is a prisoner there, or to be pitied.

Describe the Tabernacle—very beautiful—with its gold door—white silk curtains inside —the gold door locked, and Jesus within the Tabernacle, Our Lord's little golden home.

Get the children to say softly : " The Tabernacle, where Jesus is."

Talk over the great fact with them, and get them to realise some obvious results :

(a) Jesus must be often very lonely.

(b) Jesus is there always waiting for me : it is weary work to be always waiting for someone who does not come.

(c) Jesus wants me to come and visit Him. How often can I go ?

(d) It is not a kind thing to pass the door and not look in, if only for a moment.

(e) How much does Jesus love me ? Does anyone else wait for me day and night ?

(f) What shall we say to Our Lord when we go to visit Him.

Teach the children how to genuflect and give the reason. Teach them from the very beginning never to genuflect without saying a tiny prayer at the same time. Make the prayer a part of the genuflection—" Jesus, I adore Thee," or " Jesus, I love Thee," or anything else preferred, provided it be very short.

If this is taught from the beginning it will be more difficult in after life for the genuflection to become merely mechanical.

If the school is close to the church it would perhaps not be difficult to arrange that a visit be paid to the Blessed Sacrament during a part of the instruction time. Also encourage the children to pay a tiny visit, after or before school, as they pass the church. They soon get into the way of doing this and delight in it.

XII. THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT*

Link on to the visit of the Three Wise Men.

With regard to Herod it will be sufficient to say that he was a very wicked king who wanted to kill Our Lord because the Wise Men had called Our Lord King of the Jews, and Herod was jealous.

He could not find out where Our Lord was so he killed all the little babies in Bethlehem, thinking that Our Lord would be among them. It was very wicked, but the little babies were glad to die for Our Lord, and they are happy Martyrs in Heaven now.

The children can make a procession to Egypt, accompanying Our Lady and St. Joseph.

* Matt. ii., 13-18.

Show pictures of Egypt and Heliopolis. If no large ones are available show coloured postcards. (Tuck's are excellent).

Tell the story of Matariah. The following notes may help in preparation.

NOTE.—These and subsequent notes are given on the principle that we must ourselves know a great deal more on the subject than we can teach. It is hoped that they may be useful for revision when preparing the lesson.

In all the stories of the Life of Our Lord, details are a great help towards success; the same story may often, with advantage, be made to last for several consecutive days. Do not hurry, build up the pictures vividly, that they may linger in the children's minds exactly in the same way as their fairy stories do, but with a different atmosphere clinging round them.

"Where did we stop yesterday?" is a very effective way of recapitulating and reviving the keenest interest.

The stories which follow are meant to be adapted to the capacity of the particular class or set of children being taught. Children of six vary very much in this respect, and the teller of the story must judge as to how much the children can take in. *Interest* is the touch-stone. Whatever interests should be dwelt on, whatever awakens no interest, should be immediately discarded.

Matariah, where tradition places the sojourn of the Holy Family in Egypt, is a few miles north of Cairo and quite near to the ancient Heliopolis. The Pyramids can be seen from there, the sand of the surrounding desert, palm trees, camels, donkeys, etc., are all much as they were, when the eyes of the Holy Family rested on them.

Our Lady is said to have sat with the Holy Child under a tree, before entering the village. She was very tired and thirsty. St. Joseph prayed for water and a spring sprang forth. The tree and spring are now in the enclosure of a garden which belongs to the Jesuits. The tree is a Sycamore, unlike ours, bearing the "False Fig," a fruit which the Easterns eat. The present tree is said to be a seedling from the original tree cultivated in each succeeding generation with great care.

There is a well-known picture called, "Repose in Egypt"* by Van Eyck, which represents the scene. Our Lady is seated under the tree, Our Lord is lying in her arms, St. Joseph is watching over both, and a lovely little Angel with a harp is half-kneeling, half-sitting in front of Our Lady playing for the Holy Child.

Another tradition is that Our Lady, before reaching Cairo, lodged one night in a cave which belonged to a robber and his wife. The woman was very kind to the Holy Family, and was convinced that there was something wonderful about the Holy Child.

Her own little son Dismas was covered with leprosy. She washed him in the water Our Lady had used to wash the Divine Infant, and Dismas was immediately cured.

* Published by the Perry Society.

This is Dismas, the man who grew up a robber but who died the "Good Thief."

Speak too of the tradition that the statues of the false gods in the temples fell to the ground when the Holy Family entered Heliopolis at dusk one evening, weary and footsore, and seeking shelter for the night.

XIII. NAZARETH

1. Describe Nazareth and the Holy House. These notes may help.

A cottage opening at the back into a cave in the hillside. (Recall the cave at Bethlehem).

The cottage was made of stone of a reddish pink colour, plain rough walls, one low room, to the West the only window; this part was partitioned off for Our Lady. To the East another room was also cut off, and as long as St. Joseph lived this was his room, shared by our Blessed Lord.

Often Our Lord slept on the roof, on a rug; this roof was reached from the outside by means of steps. Sometimes, in the evening, when the Holy Child was asleep on the roof, His Mother and St. Joseph would go up the steps to worship Him. The room to the East was called "the chamber without light"; we should have thought it very dark.

The central part was the room where the

Holy Family lived. It got its light from the entrance. It was almost bare of furniture—a few water-jugs, a table and a few seats made by St. Joseph, and against the rough walls some small wooden cupboards in which the earthenware vessels, used by the Holy Family, were kept. The room was very low, not more than 7½ ft. high. There was a door in the middle of the back wall looking to the North which led straight to the cave.

(A Plan, however rough, might help the children. Compare size, etc., with school-room, and, if floor space allows, chalk outline on floor. The house was 33 ft. by 13 ft.).

Speak too of the Mary Well, still called by Her name, which tradition says Our Lord caused to spring forth for His Mother's use. It is at the extreme southern end of the village, and is now in an arched recess built by the Turks.

The women of Nazareth are famed for their beauty and the brilliancy and variety of their costumes. They still gather round the well at seven in the morning to draw water for the day.

The village, from the distance, looks like a star of white in a high mountain valley, and the scene, when the hill is climbed, and the town suddenly shows itself, is one of rare beauty. You look down into an oval hollow full of clean and bright houses.

2. Bring home to the children *why Our Lord lived like this*, by talking it over with them quietly, and answering their questions. Bring out Our Lord's love of poverty. If we want to be like Him we must be glad we are poor. His love of work—we may find later on that work is hard, but we must look at Him and do it. His love of the Cross—explain that we each have our cross to carry—that is, we must do as we are told, and sometimes what we do not like, and sometimes we have pain to bear.

Obedience. e.g., St. Joseph told Our Lord to get some wood. Our Lord went at once and showed how glad He was to go—that is what we must do.

3. *St. Joseph's work as a Carpenter.* Get from the children the kind of work a carpenter does, the things he makes and mends.

St. Joseph did all this plain, rough work, and Our Lord, Who knew all things, chose to work under St. Joseph and be taught by him. Describe St. Joseph's workshop—somewhere in the village—not attached to the cottage where he lived. Go into details—how, when Our Lord was old enough, they would set out for the workshop together early in the morning. Our Lord carrying the tools, or at any rate as many as He could manage. St. Joseph would unlock the door and they would go in. All had been left quite tidy the night before,

and they would begin work at once. There would be more things to mend than to make probably, and St. Joseph would tell Our Lord what he wanted, and Our Lord would wait on him. When a piece of work was finished, Our Lord would carry it down the village street to the owner's house. He would often meet other boys who knew Him and He always had a bright smile and a kind word, so that the village folk used to speak of Mary's Son as "Sweetness." When Our Lord came to the owner's door He would humbly wait for the money to take back to St. Joseph. Sometimes the village folk were very rude and refused to pay what he asked, and Our Lord listened quietly and answered gently, and then He would go back to the workshop and give St. Joseph what He had finally got.

Make the following points clear:

1. Our Lord lived this life for *them*. He knew they would have to work hard and that people would sometimes be unkind.
2. There never was a happier home than the little house at Nazareth.*

* Nelson's Bible Wall Picture: "The Boyhood of Jesus at Nazareth," No. 5.

XIV. THE LOSS IN THE TEMPLE*

Contrast Nazareth, a little village, with Jerusalem a big city. Show some pictures of Jerusalem and of the Jews. Draw attention to the beautiful dresses and rich colouring, the beasts of burden, etc. Speak of the beautiful place where Our Lord and the Jews used to pray—not exactly a church, so it was called a Temple—there was only one in the world and it was at Jerusalem.

Explain why Our Lord did not go up to Jerusalem till He was 12 years old: He remained at Nazareth with a great friend of His Mother's who could not go either, and He, of course, did exactly what His friend told Him.

Describe the famous journey the Holy Family took, accompanied for the first time, by Our Lord: the caravans—very crowded at this time of the year—the division of men and women—the children could go with either.

Tell in story form the arrival at Jerusalem —the stay of the Holy Family there—their attitude in the Temple, etc.

Describe the Temple itself.

The following notes are given, as a help to revision, before giving the description—

* Luke ii., 41-52.

accompanied with sketches and pictures suited to the stage of development the children have reached.

Jerusalem is beautifully situated—it is a city of palaces—marble and cedar-covered—with deep valleys on three sides—and one deep cleft running south and north through the middle of the city. Standing quite alone is the Temple, the courts of which rose, terrace upon terrace, high above the city. All round were marble cloisters, cedar-roofed, and the Temple itself was a mass of snowy marble and of gold, glittering in the sunshine, with Mount Olivet as a green background.

The Holy Family would first pass the city walls—the streets were very narrow, named from the Gates to which they led and from the Bazaars, where fish, timber, wool, clothing, etc., were sold.*

The grand Palace of Herod was to the north-west of the Temple, surrounded by the Towers which the King had himself built. The space round the Temple was entirely clear of the buildings. Compare the Temple with the largest building the children know.

The Holy Family would first pass through the porches of the Temple and the cloisters, made of double rows of marble pillars. "The Royal Porch" was the most beautiful of all.

* Water-Street, Fish-Street, East-Street, etc.

(It was in one of these porches that Our Lord was found, by Our Lady and St. Joseph, at the end of three days).

Everybody went into the Temple by the right, and when leaving it turned to the left.

The Holy Family passed on till they reached the Eastern Gate (there were nine altogether) made of dazzling brass and covered with ornaments. It took twenty men to open and shut it, so heavy was it. It was called the Gate Beautiful, and the poor and the lame sometimes lay just outside and asked for alms.

The Holy Family then entered what was known as the Court of the Women. Here was the Treasury—thirteen boxes shaped like trumpets—into which people dropped their alms.

Then they would go up fifteen steps more to the Court of the Priests. There was a huge stone altar in the middle of this on which three fires burned. Behind it were the marble tables and everything else wanted for the Sacrifices.

Get the children to see that Our Lady and St. Joseph were making a great act of Faith, and get them to repeat their act of Faith. Tell in story form of the stay in Jerusalem and the preparations for departure, Our Lord's remaining behind and the Parents' sorrow. Answer the children's questions, and according to what they ask dwell on the facts that:

1. He was God.

2. He had to do His Father's Will.

3. It gave Our Lady great pain, but He knew we should sometimes have to give pain to those we love, so He allowed Our Lady to bear the pain to give us an example.

4. Describe the return journey and the search through Jerusalem. Make it as vivid as possible. In the early morning of the third day they pass down one of the narrow streets of Jerusalem, and in a kind of recess they see a poor cripple lying. Something in his face makes them stop, and St. Joseph bends over him and asks him if he had seen a young boy about twelve years old pass that way. The beggar's face lights up as he describes Our Lord, and Our Lady's eyes fill with tears as She listens, and her heart beats fast with hope.

"Yes," the poor cripple continues, "He passed me on His way to the Temple hard by. I shall never forget His smile nor the comfort His words brought."

They thank him and go straight to the Temple.

5. Describe the well-known picture of Hoffmann—better still, show a coloured print of it.

XV. THE MARRIAGE FEAST OF CANA*

1. Describe the death of St. Joseph in the arms of Jesus and Mary—how much they missed him in the house at Nazareth—how hard Our Lord worked to take his place, to console His Mother and to provide for the time when He would have to leave Her.

Tell how that day came too, when Our Lord was thirty years of age : He had told Our Lady years before that He must be busy about His Father's business, and now His Father wanted Him to go from one town to another, and preach to the people and tell them what they had to do to get to Heaven.

Some fifteen miles from Nazareth (compare with some distance the children know) there was a beautiful lake called the Lake of Galilee. All round the lake small villages and towns had been built, and it was to the chief of these Our Lord now took Our Lady.

So they closed the little house at Nazareth, where they had been so happy, and they went to Capharnaum, where Our Lady lived during Our Lord's years of teaching.

(Explain that Our Lord knew He would spend most of His time not far from the lake, and that therefore Our Lady would be nearer

* John ii., 1-12.

to Him at Capharnaum, and that He would see more of Her).

But they were sad at leaving, and when they got to the top of the hill behind Nazareth they turned and looked together for the last time at the little house they had loved so much.

2. Our Lord left Our Lady in Her new home and began the work His Father had given Him to do.

Talk over the following points:

Our Lord was going

(a) To tell the people Who He was—the Son of God.

(b) To do very wonderful things, to help them to believe Him.

(c) To teach them what they had to do to get to Heaven.

At first no one believed Our Lord was God, though He showed them He was, very plainly, but He was so kind and good that several people began to follow Him and to learn what He taught them.

One day, some friends of His were going to be married. There was to be a great feast after the wedding, and Our Lord of course was invited and asked to bring as many friends as He liked.

Our Lady was there too and She had helped in the arrangements for the feast. Our Lord

brought all those friends who had begun to follow Him, and the day was a very happy one, but towards the end of the feast Our Lady saw that the bridegroom seemed very much distressed about something.

She soon found out what it was . . . *There was no more wine* . . . There had been more people at the feast than had been expected, and the wine had run short.

Our Lady went very quietly across to where Our Blessed Lord was sitting and just whispered to Him: "They have no wine."

Our Lord seemed to hesitate a moment. He had not meant to do any *wonderful things* that day, but of course, if His Mother wanted it, He would have to. Besides He could never bear to see anyone in distress. Our Lady smiled, and as She passed the waiters on Her way back to Her place, She told them to go to Her Son and to do whatever He bade them.

3. The waiters went to Our Lord to get His orders. He pointed out six big jars that were standing against the wall and told them to fill them full of water. When they had done so, the jars were just as much as they could carry. But water is not wine, and the waiters did not understand the use of filling them with water, till Our Lord said: "Fill the empty bottles from these and pour out for the guests." And the water was immediately changed into most beautiful wine, so much better than the other

wine had been, that the bridegroom immediately asked the waiters how they had got it.

They told him, and the bridegroom at once told all the guests. All were astonished and cried out: "A miracle! a miracle!"

(A miracle means something wonderful, that only God can do.) And those who were already Our Lord's friends and followers began to understand for the first time that He was God.

Make the children note that the first miracle was worked at Our Lady's intercession.

XVI. THE RAISING OF JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER*

1. Give a picture, verbal or otherwise, of Our Lord sitting out of doors, by the shores of the lake, surrounded by a crowd whom He is teaching. Try to give some idea of Eastern colouring and costume.†

Note difference in sky, cloudless, except when a storm is coming on. As the children grow older, make them better and better

* Luke vii., 40-42; Mark v., 22-24; 35-43.

† The coloured Art Post Cards by Robert Leinweber, called "The Holy Scripture in Pictures," five series of the Old Testament and five of the New are excellent as to design and colouring. They can be had from John Crition, 34 Strada Reale, Malta.

acquainted with the shores of the Lake of Galilee as it was in Our Lord's time. All round the lake a grassy plain, so covered with flowers as to be like one big garden bed. Beyond, rich fields of corn, and in the distance, bleak bare mountain peaks.

Describe the sea-beach where Our Lord so often sat, with His back to the lake, facing the multitude who were seated on the grass. Speak of the thousands of bright sails on the clear waters—some Roman galleys (picture needed), the fine fleet belonging to Herod, and hundreds of fishermen's boats. The lake itself, teeming with fish. Speak too of the trees—the walnut tree, with which perhaps the children are familiar, the palm tree, heavily laden with fruit (show picture), the grape, the fig, and the olive (mark the difference with what the children know of these in shops)—the indigo, lotus, and the sugar-cane, the laurel-rose, crimson in colour, often gleaming round the lake, like a rich girdle.

Speak too of the many streams of bright sparkling water which flow into this lake. One called "Round Fountain," another "Spring of the Fig Tree," another, which feeds a large mill-wheel and then breaks into a thousand channels and waters the thirsty fields on its way to the lake.

To the west, the shore makes a beautiful curve about four miles long. Here are the

towns Our Lord lived in during His teaching. Capharnaum—the city of Jesus—was on the north-western shore.*

Much of the above may not be suitable to some particular class—the chief point is that the children should have a lovely picture in their minds of flowers and fruit, waving corn and soft green grass in dazzling sunshine, with restful shade from the trees and a cooling breeze from the lake—the rich colouring given by the dresses of the crowd—Our Lord standing by the waters of the lake, "the most beautiful among the Sons of Men."

2. Whilst Our Lord was one day teaching by this lake, one of the great men of the city arrived suddenly, evidently in great trouble. His name was Jairus, he was a good man and rich, and he tried to help the people with his money. He had one little girl and only one, whom he dearly loved. She had been very ill for a few days—her father kept on thinking each day she would get better but that very morning she had died.

At first he would not believe it, but then, seeing that it was really true, he rushed from his house to where he knew Our Lord was and falling at His feet, he cried out:

"Lord, my little child, my only daughter,

* Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures ("Ye are of more value than many sparrows," No. 114), gives some idea of the scene. Also No. 35, "Jairus's daughter."

is dying, is dead—but come, lay your hand upon her and she will live."

The crowd stood round listening. Some of his friends, however, knowing that the little girl was dead and thinking there was no hope, had run after the poor father and now arrived all out of breath.

"Do not trouble the Master—it is too late—your child is dead."

He bowed his head in sorrow, but he still believed Our Lord would help him. Our Lord looked at him and saw how deep his grief was: His own Heart grieved too and He said gently:

"Do not fear, only believe, I will save her." And He turned to go to Jairus's house followed by the crowd.

The little girl's body was lying on the bed, and the poor mother and some others were all weeping round. "She is dead," they said. "It is too late."

But with Our Lord at hand it is never "too late."

He made the crowd stay outside, and He told the father and mother that He would wake their little one from the sleep of death. Then slowly He drew near the bed and looked for a moment at the dead child. The father and mother were looking, not at her, but at Him, watching, hoping.

Our Lord, who is the Lord of Life and

Death, took the little hand in His and with a bright smile, said gently: "My child, arise!"

The little girl immediately opened her eyes, and in great joy jumped off the bed, full of life and health, and her father caught her in his arms. She passed from him to receive her mother's kisses. They did not know what to do for joy, nor how to thank Our Lord Who had been so good to them, and Our Lord had to remind them that it was long since the little girl had had anything to eat and that she was hungry, and then, rejoicing at the parents' joy, He went back with His followers, to the shores of the lake.

XVII. THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES*

The children will tell you that as the Lake of Galilee was full of fish, many fishermen would live on its shores.

Get them to talk about the boats, the fish, the nets, etc. Draw sketches on B.B. and show pictures. Speak of the four famous fishermen, Peter and Andrew, James and John, two sets of brothers. These four were already friends of Our Lord and followed Him at times. Their home was by the shores of the lake, in a little village north of "the City of Jesus."

* Luke v., 1-11.

Arrange the events as follows, in story form.

1. Our Lord leaves Capharnaum one evening and goes into a very quiet spot outside the town and spends the night in prayer. He tells His Apostles what He is going to do, meets some travellers, chooses the spot where He will spend the night and then kneels down.

2. The two sets of brothers at Bethsaida (name need not be given) set out in their boats for a night's fishing. All is dark, they row very hard, no fish caught, etc.

3. Morning breaks, the sun is just rising and Our Lord leaves the place where He had prayed all night and walks towards the village (Bethsaida). He meets the boats as they are returning home. The brothers do not see Him and set to work to wash their nets and boats. A glad crowd gathers round Our Lord immediately. Our Lord, however, walks straight on till He comes to Peter's boat. Peter and John are glad to see Him. He says nothing about the long night of hard work, but gets into Peter's boat and asks him to push off a little from the land.

Draw a vivid picture of this, Our Lord in the boat, Peter and Andrew with him, James and John still busy with their nets at a little distance and the crowds on the shore, in their brightly-coloured cloaks and head-dresses.

What did Our Lord, seated in Peter's boat,

tell the people that day? He told them as He had already told them, that the poor were blessed, the kind, the good, that if they wanted to be happy in Heaven, they must be obedient on earth; and they all listened and gazed at Him, as He sat in the boat, and some did as He told them and are in Heaven with Him to-day, but not all.

4. When Our Lord ceased speaking, a wonderful thing happened. He turned to St. Peter sitting in the boat by His side, and told him to row out further from the land, into deep waters beyond.

"Well, Master," St. Peter answered, "we have worked hard all night through, letting down our nets and catching nothing, but if You tell me to try again, I will." So he and St. Andrew began to row swiftly and steadily far out into the lake. They had not gone very far when Our Lord said:

"Stop!"

They laid their oars down by the side of the boat and St. Peter and St. Andrew seized the big net and let it down very quietly into the water. Immediately it began to fill with fish and such a quantity were caught that the net broke, and the two brothers were afraid of losing some of the fish.

Our Lord stood smiling at their wonder and astonishment.

On the shore they could see St. James and

St. John still cleaning their nets. It was too far for them to shout, so they began to signal, and luckily St. John saw them. He had had his eye on St. Peter's boat all the time and had wondered where Our Lord was going to when He rowed away, and now he and St. James row as fast as they can to where St. Peter and St. Andrew are struggling to keep the huge multitude of fishes in the broken net.

5. As soon as St. James and St. John got their boat close up to St. Peter's, after giving a glad look of welcome to Our Lord and receiving one in return, they set to work to empty the fish into the boat. They went on and on till they had filled St. Peter's boat, so that it would hold no more and then they fill St. James's in the same way. The two boats sink lower and lower into the water with the weight of the fish, till the fishermen feel, if they put any more in, that the boats will sink altogether, so they throw the rest of the fish (there were still many left in the net) back into the sea and draw in their broken net.

Then they stood still for a moment and gazed on the sight. Our Lord was standing quietly in St. Peter's boat, looking at them with great love, and the fish were lying, stacked in hundreds in both boats.

They knew Who it was Who had done this, Christ, the Son of God, and St. Peter, understanding it better than the others, fell on his

knees at Our Lord's Feet and cried out: "Do not choose me, O Lord, to follow You, for I am a sinner."

Our Lord saw that they were frightened and He laid His Hand gently on St. Peter's shoulder: "Fear not," He said, "in future you shall catch, not fish—but men!"

Talk over these words with the children.

End by describing the last scene, when they returned to land, and leaving their boats and broken nets, "they followed Him."

The children will have much to say about this story, and about the four Apostles concerned in it.

Incidentally, tell as much as they want to know, about all four.

If there are fifty or more in the class, it will be necessary for conversational purposes, to divide into sections.

This story could, as recapitulation, take the form of duologues, etc. For instance, St. Peter and St. John, helped by St. Andrew and St. James, might tell it to a group of Our Lord's followers, who had not been present at the time and wanted to hear about it.

It is not wise to include the person of Our Lord in extempore dramatisation. It tends to spoil the imaginative idea.

Many religious stories lend themselves to

dramatisation, but the Gospels should be on a level of their own.

This objection does not, however, seem to apply to the Christmas Mysteries—the Crib represents Our Lord; and the whole is more like a Children's Service, than a school Dramatisation.

XVIII. SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME*

Our Lord was one day on His way to Jerusalem. He had been near the lake for a long time and had worked many miracles, and had taught the people many beautiful things, and they had learnt to love Him very much. When they heard that He was going away, they were very sorry.

There were always crowds round Our Lord, and the Apostles sometimes got very tired trying to satisfy everybody.

This day they had been more than usually busy, because everybody wanted to see Our Lord to say good-bye. Many mothers had brought their children with them, for all children loved Our Lord, and He loved them,

* Matt. xix., 13-15; Mark x., 13-16; Luke xviii., 15-17.

and the children had cried when they heard that He was going away, and had begged to go with their mothers.*

In spite of there being so many, Our Lord said something kind to each one, and He kissed each child and put his Hand on each head, and He blessed them and sent them away happy. And they had told Him how much they loved Him, and how, even if He did go away, they would never forget Him.

This had been going on some time, and St. Peter thought, far too long. Our Lord had turned away for a moment to speak to another band of people who wanted Him, and St. Peter said to St. Andrew, his brother: "We must really put a stop to this."

They went up to some women who were waiting their turn and who had their babies in their arms.

"Go home," they said, "and take these children away, cannot you see how tired the Master is? This has been going on all the morning, and He has a long journey in front of Him. What is the use of bringing these babies to Him?"

Our Lord heard these last words and He turned sharply round.

"Not so," He said. "You are very wrong,

* Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures No. 60, "Christ blesses Little Children."

Peter, to speak thus; let all the little children come to Me, and never prevent them," and He put His arm round a little boy, who, in spite of the Apostles had crept close to Him.

"Do you not know," Our Lord went on to say: "that all little children go to Heaven, and unless you are gentle, obedient and humble like this little child, you will not go there?"

St. Peter, and St. Andrew felt very sorry for what they had done, for Our Lord was evidently very much displeased. He loved children so much, He could not bear that anyone should keep them from Him. So He turned now to this last band and blessed them and embraced them, as He had done all the others.

In the talk with the children which follows, bring out that Our Lord is the same to-day as He was then—that He wants them near to Him now, as He did then—that very soon they will have Him closer to them, than He has yet been—He will come into their hearts, on the day of their First Communion.

XIX. MARTHA AND MARY*

1. Introduce the two sisters and their brother Lazarus: Our Lord's great friends—Our Lord's helpers—always ready when He wanted something—the little house at Bethany—close to Jerusalem—(There was only Mount Olivet between Jerusalem and Bethany, and so Our Lord often stayed with Mary and Martha.) His room always ready there—also food or rest.

2. Tell something of Jewish customs—the feet in sandals—draw one on B.B.—result—the feet often dirtied—needed frequent washing—use of perfumes, etc.

Speak of Magdalene after she had done very wrong, coming to tell Our Lord about it—tell also of the alabaster box, and the other anointing—of Martha's faithful service—of Magdalene's loving attention, at Our Lord's Feet—how He loved both—but Mary most.

Talk all this over and bring out how loving and faithful Martha and Mary were—and how they did all they could for Our Blessed Lord—they could not do much—still "what they could."†

* Luke vii., 36-50; x., 38-42; John xii., 1-11; Mark xiv., 3-9.

† Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures, "Mary and the Alabaster Box," No. 75.

3. How did Our Lord reward this love?

(a) He forgave Magdalene all her big sins.

(b) Others often spoke unkindly of her, but He always took her part. (Give examples).

(c) Once when her brother Lazarus died Our Lord raised him to life, because He could not bear to see Mary and Martha in sorrow. (Tell the story in full if the children ask for it. St. John xi., 1-54).

(d) He let her, who had been a great sinner, stand beside His Blessed Mother at the Foot of the Cross when He was dying.

(e) And when He rose from the dead, as soon as He had seen his own dear Mother, He went straight to Magdalene to comfort her and tell Her He was still on earth.

(f) And now for ages and ages, Lazarus and Martha and Mary have been happy in Heaven, because they tried to be good to Him, when they were on earth.

Get the children to suggest that they too can help Jesus and be good to Him, *e.g.*, by prayer, by kindness, by visits to the Blessed Sacrament, etc.

XX. THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST*†

Events.—1. Our Lord is in Capharnaum and the crowds press upon Him night and day. He cannot walk by the lake for them and if He goes home to His Mother, they crowd round the door. You would have helped to do the same had you been there.

Our Lord knows that His apostles are almost as tired as He is, and so He tells them that they will leave the "City of Jesus" for a time, and go across the lake to the hilly country on the opposite side (Perea).

First He bade them disperse the crowds—then before these had time to gather again, they all went on board a boat—we do not know whether it was St. Peter's or St. James's or one of the others.

2. Our Lord made no preparation for the journey—He was too weary, and they took Him in the boat—just as He was. St. John brought a pillow, etc. The apostles were very quiet and silent, anxious not to wake Him.

3. Several other boats had started with theirs, for it was a lovely evening and the

* Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures: "Jesus Stilling the Storm," No. 34.

† Matt. vii., 13-23; Mark iv., 35-40; Luke vii., 22-26.

dark sky was lit with stars, but scarcely had our Lord's eyes closed in sleep than everything changed. Explain with what suddenness most violent storms sometimes burst on the sea of Galilee. The icy cold wind from the north blows down upon the lake and makes the sea rage with anger. The huge waves play with the fishermen's boats as if they were walnut-shells—the sails are torn away, the masts are broken, and the waters beat in on every side. (Show pictures of storms at sea).

This time the boats that had started with Our Lord were all scattered in different directions. The apostles rowed desperately against the wind; they did not dare to wake Our Lord, and they wondered how He could still sleep, for the wind was roaring, and the boat was being tossed high and low.

It was only when they felt that it was actually sinking beneath their feet that they threw themselves upon Our Lord, calling upon Him loudly and in agony:

"Master, save us, we perish!"

Our Lord rose very quietly and He seemed more anxious to calm their fears than to still the raging sea. "Why are you afraid?" He asked. And as the Apostles heard His gentle Voice, they felt ashamed that they had ever been afraid when He was near.

Then He turned His face towards the sea—He spoke to the winds and the waves—"Be

quiet," He said, "peace, be still!" And He had hardly said the words when the waters became quite calm and the wind ceased and all was perfectly still—for the winds and the sea obey God and only God. The clouds were gone, the stars shone out, and without any more rowing, the boat gently touched the shore on the opposite side to Capharnaum.

The Apostles were quite silent too. They understood how foolish it is to be afraid when Our Lord is there.

There were some sailors too in the boat, who had been quite sure they were going to be drowned, and they too were full of gratitude and astonishment. "Who is this?" they asked. "This is no ordinary man. He commands the winds and the waves and they obey Him!"

XXI. CALVARY

1. Talk over the following points with the children:

(a) Our Blessed Lord, Who is God, loves them very much. When we love people very much, we want to have them near us.

Our Blessed Lord always wanted and still wants to have each one of us near Him in Heaven.

(b) But His Heavenly Father was displeased with all men because man had sinned, and He would not have us in Heaven till that sin had been made all right.

(c) Our Lord knew that He alone could make that sin all right, and that is why He came down from Heaven.

(d) Now, He might have done this in many ways: *e.g.*, He might have come on earth, as a great King.

How did He come?

Or at any rate, He might have lived a very easy life on earth.

Was it very easy?

You will wonder why He was born so poor and why He lived so hard a life. Because He thought to Himself: "All the men and women and children I am going to save will not be rich. They will not have easy lives. They will not be able to have everything they like, so I will not either. I want to have them in Heaven with Me, and so I want to show them how to get there. And if they are to get to Heaven they must be poor. They must work hard, and they must do the things they don't like. So I will choose for Myself a hard life. If I do that first they will follow Me."

(e) And the chief thing Our Lord wanted to teach us, is that He loves us—"I must make quite sure they learn of that."

And so He made up His mind, that He would die for us. He knew that if He died for us, we could not doubt His love.

There were wicked people on earth, in those days, as there are wicked people now—and He let those wicked people take hold of Him and they hated Him, as wicked people do now—and they killed Him, by nailing Him to a Cross, with four big nails, one through each Hand, and one through each Foot. And He hung on that Cross for you and for me, for three hours in terrible pain and then He died. (Picture explained.)

And all our sin was forgiven, and Our Heavenly Father took us all as His Children for Jesus's sake—and the two beautiful gates of Heaven were flung open wide, so that we might get in—for they had been locked till then—and Our Lord, Who only remained dead three days, raised Himself from the dead, all beautiful and bright, and He went up to Heaven, forty days after, and is waiting there now, till our life here is finished, and we have shown Him that we love Him, and then He will come and take us to Heaven too, because He bought Heaven for us, the day He died.

This should be followed by several other lessons, in which the children's questions are

answered—pictures are shown and the story of Calvary told, though not in detail.*

In all of these, dwell on the great truth, "He died *for me*, and He loves *me*."

XXII. EASTER DAY†‡

This lesson will be best as a story.

It should bring out that Our Lord is God—He died because He chose to—and He took up His life again just when He chose—only God could do this.

The story could be divided into the following scenes.

1. The Earthquake—the Angel rolling back a very heavy stone, which had closed up the cave where Our Lord's Body had been laid; the face of the Angel like lightning—dress, like dazzling snow.

2. The tomb empty, because Our Lord had Himself lifted up His Body and made it full of life—bright and beautiful—as it had never been before, and then He had left the tomb and gone to console His holy Mother.

3. All is quiet again and some of Our Lord's

* Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures: "Christ Crucified," No. 84.

† Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures: "Christ risen from the dead," No. 137.

‡ Matt. xxviii., 1-15; Mark xvi., 1-11; John xxi., 1-18.

friends—St. Mary Magdalene, St. Martha and others are seen coming up towards the Tomb. Speak of the ointment they carry—the Angel sitting at the right hand of the dark cave—His words—"Do not be afraid—I know Whom you are looking for—Jesus of Nazareth—He is risen—Go and tell the good news to Peter and the others—you will soon see the Lord, risen from the dead."

4. They turned away in great joy, though still in fear—but Magdalene, who loved Him best stayed behind—She could not feel any joy till she had seen Him again.

She looked into the tomb to make quite sure that Our Lord's Body was not there. Through her tears she saw two Angels seated inside, and she told them that someone had taken Our Lord away, and she did not know where He was.

And then she saw Someone else standing close by, but because she was crying so bitterly she did not see Who it was.

Someone said: "Why are you crying? What do you want?"

She did not look up, but thought He was the gardener . . .

Then Our Lord Himself, for it was He, called her by her name: "Mary!" and with a great cry of joy, she fell at His Feet, saying: "Master! dear Master!"

And after Our Lord had comforted her He

told her that He was going to stay a little longer on earth before going back to Heaven, and that she was to go to all His friends and tell them the glad news, and that that very day they were to see Him.

The road to Emmaus*; the Apparition to the Apostles on Easter Sunday evening† : the Lake of Tiberias and St. Peter's three-fold act of love,‡ are the three Apparitions which will appeal most to the children.

Each story should bring out Our Lord's love, and that :

1. Neither the hate shewn by His enemies, nor all the bitter pain, nor the being left alone by His friends to die, had made Him love them less.

2. His one thought now was to console and comfort them.

3. He stayed for forty days, because He could not bear to leave them till they were happy, and really believed He was the same Lord they had known before, and also because He had so much to teach them still.

* Luke xxiv., 13-44.

† John xx., 24-31.

‡ John xxi., 1-24.

XXIII. The ASCENSION*

A picture here is essential, as without it the words will not give any idea.

Having got the children to examine the picture carefully get them to question you about it.

Talk over points like the following:

Where is Our Lord going to?
Why is He going?
For how long?
Is anyone going with Him?
Whom will He see when He gets to Heaven?
Who said good-bye to Him?
Why were those, who were left behind, both glad and sorry?
Why did His Mother not go too? etc.

(End of Second Year's Course.)

* Mark xvi., 19-20; Luke xxiv., 50-63.

THIRD YEAR'S COURSE.

1. FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

1. Get the children to understand, by homely examples, the meaning of the three theological virtues, *e.g.*, a child, who is fond of joking, rushes into the room excitedly to tell them that a big tree has been blown down. They run off to *see*, they find it is so and then they believe. This is not Faith.

Their father tells them that when he was in town yesterday, there was a bad motor accident. They are immediately sure there was; they did not see it, they had heard nothing about it from anybody else, but father said so—that is quite enough, etc.

2. In the same kind of way teach, with regard to Hope, that it includes belief in someone's knowledge, goodness and power, *e.g.*, they hope for a present from someone who knows them, who loves them and has the power to give it them. Apply this to God, to Heaven and to all God's gifts.

3. What love means: (a) choice—preference; (b) willingness to give.

(a) There must be some reason for the choice. We love the people who love us and are kind to us, therefore we love God. We choose God as our friend—our chief love,

therefore we give God things, which we think He would like. (b) Get the children to suggest examples—enforce idea of self-denial—giving up to God, because we love Him, etc.

Some simple examples might be given of how these things make sunshine in our hearts. Wrong-doing brings a cloud, and then we cannot see the sun, but if we tell Our Lord we are sorry, then the cloud melts away and the sunshine comes back. With regard to the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity by far the best are those the children make for themselves, and they should be encouraged to do this as often and in as many different ways as possible.

Suggested Acts that might be learnt by heart.

Faith. My God, I believe every word which You have said, because You are God and cannot make a mistake.

Hope. My God, I hope You will give me all I need now and till I come to die, and then that You will let me see You and be with You in Heaven.

Love. My God, I love You with my whole heart because You are so good, so beautiful and so kind to me.

Sorrow. O Jesus, my God, I love You because You are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against You, and I will not sin any more.

II. THE BLESSED TRINITY

1. By conversation revise the children's knowledge of each of the Divine Persons. Guide their questions on to the following or similar lines:

Show the children some flowers; let them admire them, then ask: "Where were these flowers six months ago?" "Nowhere."

"And you: how old are you?" "Six." "Where were you seven years ago?" "Nowhere."

"And mother? She was once a little girl, and a few years before that where was she? And grandmother?" etc.

There was a time when everything on this earth was *nowhere*. But God? There never was a time when He was *nowhere*. He was always there, etc.

That which can never die is called a spirit. Our soul is a little spirit and so can never die. God is the Great Spirit Who has always lived, lives and will always live.

Our soul lives and will always live in Heaven, with God, if we are good—for God the Father is the good Father of each one of us—and He wants His children to live at home with Him.

2. Revise the children's knowledge of Our Lord's Life. Reimpress the fact that He is

God—God the Son—equal to the Father, as beautiful, as powerful, as good.

God the Father sent His Son into the world to die for us, and show us how to get to Heaven.

3. Remind the children how St. Peter and the other Apostles were chosen by Our Lord to work with Him, whilst He was upon earth. After the Ascension what were the Apostles to do? Which of them was to fill Our Lord's place? Whose boat did Our Lord teach from? etc.

Recall the story of the Apparition by the Lake of Tiberias. To whom did Our Lord say, "Feed My Lambs."

So Our Lord had chosen St. Peter to take His place. St. Peter was therefore at the head of all the Apostles, and of all those who believed in Our Lord. St. Peter was Pope, he was the first, and since his time there has always been a Pope. When St. Peter died another was chosen. (If children ask his name, give it—St. Linus.) Give name of present Pope, with some details of where he lives, what he does, etc.

The Pope tells us what to believe and what to do, he cannot make a mistake about this—Why not? Because the Holy Ghost tells the Pope what to teach, and what to tell us to do, and the Holy Ghost is God, and God can never make a mistake.

Before Our Lord went up to Heaven, He promised St. Peter this, that He would send the Holy Ghost from Heaven, Who would stay here on earth and tell the Pope, and the Priests and everybody what they were to do.

If He is on earth why cannot we see Him?

Because the Holy Ghost is God . . . the Great Spirit.

Refer to their own souls, which they cannot see, and recall the stories of Nicodemus, Elias, etc.

The air is a fairly good example of a thing which the children know exists, but which they "cannot see."

Insist on the fact that the three divine Persons are one God. End by the story of the coming of the Holy Ghost on Whitsunday.

III. THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Creed should be learnt by heart. Make the children understand that it is a beautiful act of Faith, in which we remind God of some of the chief things we know about Him, about His Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of all He did for us, and about the Holy Ghost and of all He does. Get children to learn one of these divisions at a time.

In connection with the Creed, a little dramatisation might be helpful.

Scene: Rome in the second century.

Scene I. Some pagan converts, being received into the Church. Before Baptism they have to repeat the Apostles' Creed.

Scene II. The trial or martyrdom of these same converts, who answer the judge's questions by repeating the Creed.

IV. CONFESSION. (A story leading up to it)

Introduction. When Our Lord was on earth, He was always trying to get people to believe that He loved them. He worked very hard for this; He was forever doing kind things: making sick people well again, curing their eyes or their ears, or whatever it was that was wrong with them, and saying loving, kind words to comfort them when they were crying. The people seem often to have been very stupid and not to have understood that He did all this *because* He loved them. You and I must not be stupid but know that He loves us, and likes us, and wants us to be near Him always.

Some of these people thought that they themselves were very good, which is a silly

thing to do, and they used to point out other people and say they were not good at all, and then they pointed back at themselves and said: "Just look at the difference." that was unkind, and no unkind person can be good, it was also untrue. (Tell the story of the Pharisee and the Publican, *very* simply—and apply to children.)*

Now Our Lord loved these poor people, who were treated so unkindly, very much, even though it was quite true that they had done wrong. And very often He made them His special friends, and He got them to understand that when we have done wrong, He just loves us to run to Him and to say so and to tell Him how sorry we are and that we won't do it again. And then He makes it quite all right again and we are greater friends with Him than before.

One day, when Our Lord was talking to some poor sinners, they asked Him to tell them a story—they were as fond of stories as you are—and Our Lord told them this "truly-true" story, which I am going to tell you.†

"There was once a certain man, whom I knew very well, who had two sons; the younger knew that his father was rich and that he too would be rich when his father died, but he thought that would not be for a long

* Luke xviii., 9-14.
† Luke xv., 11-24.

time, and he did not like to think of his father dying, so he said: 'Give me now my share of everything.'

"And his kind father gave him, then and there, his whole share.

"Then the younger son went off, far, far away, where his father could not even get news of him and he wasted *all* his money.

"And when he had not a penny left, he turned to his companions who had helped him to spend it all and asked them for some.

"But they said: 'No, it is all your own fault. We have no money for you.'

"The younger son did not know what to do, for everything was so dear in that country just then—the weather had been very bad—there was no harvest and everyone was starving.

"Then he grew very miserable and he thought of his happy home and his kind father and how all the servants there were well-fed and taken care of, and how much dearer he was to his father than they could be. And so he made up his mind.

"'I will go to my father and I will say: "Father, I have done very wrong towards God and towards you. I don't deserve to be called your child any longer. Let me be one of your servants and I will serve you and never do wrong again."'

"He started for home immediately, and what was his joy, when, as he was still a long

way off, he saw his father standing at the top of the hill he was climbing, with his arms stretched out towards him.

"He had been waiting and watching for him all the time. And the poor boy rushed into his arms, sobbing and saying: 'Father, I have done very wrong: I don't deserve to be called your son.' He could not get any further. His father would not let him finish, but fell on his neck and kissed him. And they went home together—the father trembling with joy—the son still sobbing, but so happy because he had told his father everything, and he knew he was forgiven.*

"As soon as they got home, his father told the servants to bring some beautiful clothes for his son to wear and to put a ring on his finger showing that he was his son again, and to make a big feast, because he said: 'Let us eat and be merry, for my son was dead and has come to life again—he was lost and is found.'"

When the children are talking this story over with you, dwell on the *joy* of confession and forgiveness.

The younger son had *made it all right again.*

* Nelson's Bible Wall Pictures: "The Prodigal Son," No. 57.

He felt *happy inside*—he got back all he had lost.

He went to confession to his father, and that is what we have to do to Our Lord.

When we have done wrong we have to go to Our Lord and to say so.

"Jesus, I have done wrong and I am very sorry. I have been disobedient," or "I have been unkind," or "I lost my temper and fought with my companions," or "I was rude and answered back," or *whatever it is* that we have done, which we think was wrong. Of course, people who tell lies or steal must be sure to tell the priest about it, but if we say our prayers well, there is no reason why we should ever do such things.

If we have fought with our little brother or sister, we should say so, but we must not give the name of the person we fought with. We are only busy about our *own* sins.

The priest is there in Our Lord's place and when we tell the priest, it is the same as if we told Our Lord.

The younger son was very sorry and promised never to do these wrong things again, and that is what we must do too.

We *are* very sorry:

1. Because God is so good to us and we have not been good to Him.

2. Because God hates sin—wrong-doing, and we have done what God hates.

3. Because Our Blessed Lord died for us, and instead of doing all we could for Him, we have done what He does not want us to do.

4. Because Our Lord is sorry and Our Lady is sorry and so too our Guardian Angel, and so we tell each of them in turn not to be sorry any more, because we are going to be good and not do wrong again.

Do not tell the children that there is nothing to be frightened about, as that will probably give them some idea of fear which they need not have.

End the lesson by the act of contrition, given above, or by some equivalent one.

V. GOING TO CONFESSION

This is a very simple thing.

1. We ask the priest to bless us: "Please Father, bless me."

2. We tell our sins to the priest, which is the same thing as telling them to Our Lord. Our Lord forgets all about them as soon as He has forgiven us, and so does the priest.

3. Then the priest talks to us for a little time and we must listen to what he says and do whatever he tells us to do. He will tell us to say some prayer we know very well—per-

haps the Our Father or some Hail Maries. This is called the Penance.

Explain by reference to some everyday example of punishment (penance) *e.g.* "sent to bed early," or not allowed to go out to play, etc.

The Penance which the priest bids us say is the little punishment which Our Lord gives us for having done wrong. It is very small, but we must listen attentively when the priest tells us what it is to be, and we must be sure to say it afterwards.

Recapitulate under three simple headings:
Telling our sins.
Listening to what the priest says.
Remembering what prayer he has told us to say.

4. And then a wonderful thing happens.

The priest will ask you to tell Our Lord again that you are very sorry for having done wrong, and you repeat several times very softly: "Jesus, I am very sorry. I love You. I will not do it again."

And whilst you are saying this the priest will say some words over you, which you will not understand. They are wonderful words, some of the most wonderful words the priest ever says, and whilst he is saying them Our Blessed Lord is pouring His Precious Blood over your soul, so that when you come away

from Confession your soul is as white as snow and dazzling with the beautiful red jewels of His Precious Blood.

You may be quite happy then—all that was wrong has been made quite right and the priest will say: "God bless you," and you go away, feeling so good and so happy, and Our Lord loves you more than He ever did before.

The Confessional is rather a frightening place to a six-year-old child, especially if it is dark—and it is essential to keep away every idea of fear.

Take the band who are preparing for "First Confession" to the Church some day, when nothing is going on, and make them go into the Confessional and examine it in all its details, so as to prevent their feeling the place strange when the time comes for Confession.

VI. THANKSGIVING AFTER CONFESSION

Whenever we get a present we must thank for it—in Confession we receive a beautiful present, so when the priest sends us away, we go back to our place in the church and thank our dear Lord for having made it all right, for having poured His Precious Blood on our soul,

and for making us good, so that it will be easier not to do wrong again.

Then we say our Penance because the priest told us to, and because it is our little punishment—so we say it slowly and carefully. Then we turn to Our Lord again and ask Him again to help us never to do the wrong thing, whatever it was, we have told the priest about,—we can talk to Him as long as we like—and we ask Our Lady to help us because She is our Mother, and all mothers like to have good children, and we ask our Guardian Angel to look after our promise and not let us forget it. We might also say the prayer, "Heart of Jesus, look on me"*: and we ask Our Lord to give us His blessing before we go away.

Recapitulate the big points, varying with different stories, until the children are quite at home with what they have to do, and with what it all means.

It is not wise to let the children *play* at "going to Confession." If they are well prepared the first time, they will need but little help for subsequent Confessions, but without using any compulsion or introducing routine, which is fatal to right practice after they leave school, try to obtain regular fortnightly Con-

* "A Child's Prayers to Jesus," by Father W. Roche, S.J. Longmans, Green & Co. Price 1/-

fession from the first. Early habits are not easily eradicated. And from time to time, take a suitable miracle or parable (the cleansing of the leper, St. Mary Magdalene, the Good Thief, the Lost Sheep, etc.) and talk it over, in connection with Confession. The important point is, of course, sorrow and purpose of amendment, not so much the examination of conscience.

VII. THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND*

Our Lord had one day been preaching to a great crowd of people not far from the lake. It was now evening and the sun had all but set. The crowd was still staying on, and some of the Apostles thought it was high time Our Lord sent them home.

Our Lord was at that moment talking to one of His friends, whom He dearly loved, called Philip. "Philip," He said, "all these men and women are hungry. Where can we get bread for them?"

St. Philip answered, "Lord, even if we could find a shop near at hand, it would cost more than 200 pence to feed all these, and we

* Matt. xv., 32-39; Mark vi., 35-45; John vi., 1-15.

are very poor. There are 5,000 men and women, and there are the children besides."

Our Lord did not like to think of the children, especially, being hungry.

Just at that moment, up came St. Peter and St. John and some of the others. "Lord," they said, "There is nothing to eat here: it is nearly sunset: send away all these people and let them go into the nearest towns and buy some bread for themselves."

But our Lord answered, "There is no need for them to go: you give them something to eat."

They looked at one another astonished and St. Philip repeated, "Lord, I told You, if You can give us 200 pence we might be able to get bread enough."

Our Lord looked rather sad for a moment, because the Apostles did not trust Him enough, but He only answered, "How many loaves have you got?"

St. Andrew said, "There is a boy here with a basket: he has five loaves and two little fishes—but that is no good."

Our Lord said, "Bring the loaves to Me." And they brought them.

"Make all the people sit down on the grass in groups of hundreds and fifties."

The Apostles did this, and our Lord raised His Eyes and looked at the crowd.

There were about sixty big groups in all and

they filled a large space, so that some seemed quite far away, and in their bright-coloured dresses they looked like so many flower-beds in the long grass. Our Lord blessed the loaves and then broke them into twelve pieces, and said : " Go now and feed the 5,000 with that."

It was very wonderful to watch. The Apostles began breaking off large pieces of bread, one after another, from the half-loaf they had in their hands and the bread never grew less but there was always more and more, and each Apostle fed over 400 people from this little half-loaf, and they all had enough and more than enough.

Then our Lord blessed the little fishes—there were only two remember—and sent His Apostles round with them, and the fish multiplied, so that instead of two, there were thousands of fish, and when all the 5,000 had been served, the Apostles came and stood by our Lord in silence.

They had a great deal to think about—He was always giving them these glorious surprises—always showing more power and more love, and they saw and they knew that He must be God, and they prayed to trust Him always.

And when the meal was over, Our Lord told His Apostles each to take a basket and collect all the pieces of bread and fish that were lying about (He did not like anything to be wasted).

And the Apostles filled twelve baskets of what was over, though the bread and fish to begin with would not have filled one.

Then the crowd rose in great excitement and joy—they too, declared that Our Lord was God, but our Lord stopped their shouting and sent them away quietly to their homes.

VIII. THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM*

This story lends itself easily to dramatisation: the children can form a procession, carrying little branches if easily obtainable. (A little twig with a leaf is enough, or some grass).

The door of the schoolroom can represent the door of the Church, as on Palm Sunday, when the procession takes place.

Do not bring in any representative of Our Lord Himself—there is none in the Palm Sunday Procession.

Tell the story first, of course, and bring out the idea that they are going to sing in honour of Our Lord—they would not like the Jews to honour Him more than they.

Divide the children into two choirs, one inside, the other outside the door—the knock-

* Matt. xxi., 1-12.

ing, etc., is dramatic. (See Missal for Palm Sunday: also Education Series—T. Shields, Education Press, Washington, but obtainable from any Catholic Bookseller. Religion Book III., p. 108.)

The children might sing the two easiest verses of the "Hymn for Palm Sunday." A picture will help.*

IX. THE LAST SUPPER

Leaving out the meaning of Pasch and the Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, describe as the *First Scene.*† Our Lord telling St. Peter and St. John to go into the city and prepare their supper for them, one Thursday evening. It was to be a very solemn supper, for He knew that He was to die the next day, and it was the last time before His death, He was to see all His Apostles together.

Bring in about the man carrying the jug of water, the large dining-room, etc.

Second Scene.‡ Show an oleograph of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. Get the children to describe it and to notice the faces of the Apostles.

* Nelson's Bible Wall Series: "The Triumphal Entry."

† Mark xiv., 12-16.

‡ John xiii., 1-15; Matt. xxvi., 26-30; Luke xxii., 14-20.

Leave out about Judas unless the children have already had his full story—it is a most effective one, but should stand out alone, and may well be left till next year.

Dwell on some of the loving words of Our Lord—His desire to eat this Supper with them before He suffered—His love—how He loved them *to the end.*

Third Scene. The Institution of the Blessed Sacrament.

Our Lord was going to show His Love in a wonderful way—so wonderful that if He had not told us, we could never have imagined it.

He was going to die the very next day—He knew how lonely all who loved Him would be, and, as God, He could see on through all the time to come—He saw you and me—each one of us—and He knew how badly we should need Him for a Friend—so He did the most wonderful thing—He took bread into His holy Hands, blessed it, and it was immediately changed into His own Body and Blood, and He gave It to His Apostles and said: "Take and eat—This is My Body." And the wine too He changed into His Blood, and He told the Apostles to do what He had done, and because again, He thought of you and me as well as of the Apostles, He has told all His priests to do the same thing—so that in the Holy Mass, when the priest says the same words as Our Blessed Lord said, the bread

and wine on the altar are changed into His Body and Blood.

Teach *very slowly*, dwelling on each action.

Our Lord Himself is there, true God and Man, the same Lord, Who was born for us, at Bethlehem, etc.

And when you make your First Communion, Our Lord will come into your hearts, under the form of bread, just as He came into the hearts of the Apostles, that Thursday night.

X. THE REAL PRESENCE

1. Recall all the children know about Our Lord's life in the Tabernacle—how He loves us to visit Him there—get suggestions as to how the time of such visits should be spent.

Refer to the fact that Our Lord is there, by night as by day.

Why? In case someone wants Him—the monks and nuns who pray by night, as well as by day—the sick, etc.

2. Explain the Service of Benediction.

The lights and flowers are there as gifts to Our Lord, and to help us to think of Him.

We may look at Our Lord on His golden Throne all the time, because He is there expressly that we may see Him, and He is doing for us, who are kneeling round Him, just

what He did for the crowds who pressed round Him by the lake.

He loves, He cures, He teaches, He blesses us from His throne. Speak of the big blessing at the end.

3. The account of St. Tarcisius, patron of First Communicants, might be given in story form and his martyrdom in full. (See "Fabiola" by Cardinal Wiseman: Chapter XXII. The Viaticum.)

XI. THE HOLY MASS*

1. Talk over going to church on Sunday.

Why we go? Not merely to say our prayers —we go because we want to be present when something very wonderful is going on. What is that?

It is called the Holy Mass, and it is the most wonderful thing that ever takes place on earth.

What do we see?

Perhaps we cannot see very much from our place, but we see the priest at the altar (B.B. sketch or picture of the altar) (See many pictures in the Children's Bread: Pt. 1, by Father Roche, S.J.)

* "The Little Ones' Mass Book," with its helpful pictures and simple prayers, is as good a prayer book for little children as one could wish for. Published by Messrs. Sands & Co., 15 King Street, Covent Garden, London, and Edinburgh and Glasgow. Price 3d.

The priest is not merely praying. He is doing this wonderful thing, the same thing Our Lord did at the Last Supper. You remember how Our Lord then took bread and wine and blessed them. What did they become?

And you remember too how He has told everyone of His priests to do what He had done, and He has made it easy for them to do it. That is what is going on during Mass.

Recapitulate slowly and impressively, and answer children's questions.

1. The priest does what Our Lord did at the Last Supper.

2. The bread and wine are changed into Our Lord, the same Lord as at Bethlehem. . . (Expand this.)

3. He is there, alive, beautiful, glorious, able to do whatever He likes, and above all, loving each one of them.

XII. HOLY COMMUNION

1. Get the children's answers to the question: "What has Our Lord done for me?" Suggest and supplement.

2. His greatest gift has yet to come, He is going to give Himself to me, wholly and entirely in Holy Communion. He thought that even the Holy Mass did not bring Him close

enough. He wants to come into my very heart. This is what Holy Communion means, Our Lord Himself, under the form of a little piece of white bread, enters our hearts and makes them His own.

Recall what the children have already learnt about the consecration. Our Lord Himself is then on the altar, but we are kneeling in the Church, and when we love a person very dearly, we do not like to see them far away.

If they saw their mother standing at the top of the stairs and they were at the bottom they would run up the stairs to meet her and she would take them in her arms. That is what Our Lord does. He calls each one of us from the altar, "Come, I want *you*. I want to be closer to you than father or mother can be, because I am your God, so come up the altar steps and the priest will give Me to you."

And then with great faith and hope and love, we do what Our Lord tells us. We get up very quietly from our place, we keep our eyes down and our hands joined and we go and kneel in front of the altar, and the priest comes down from the altar, holding what looks like a little white circle of bread, but we know better; we know that it is our Lord Himself, because He has said so, and the priest places the little white circle of bread on our tongue, we swallow it, and we receive Our Lord into our hearts, and He is our very own.

And then we go back to our place, bearing our treasure very carefully and we listen to what Our Lord says to us in our hearts and we answer and talk to Him.

Enlarge a little on the wonderful moments which follow.

XIII. THE EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION

1. Use the ordinary example of food for the body and food for the soul, therefore strength against temptation.

2. Our Lord makes us holy, nothing makes us so holy as Holy Communion. We get holier every time we receive Our Lord, and all the time He is in our hearts He is working hard at making us more like Himself.

3. He forgives all small faults and wrong-doing.

4. When we die, our bodies are put into the earth and they crumble to dust, but if we have received Our Lord in Holy Communion, He will raise them up again and make them beautiful and glorious in Heaven.

With the help of the children's pennies, get them each to make a little prayer-book. A few small sheets of brown paper stitched together make a booklet. The child pastes

his own pictures in, bought with his pennies, and added to from collections of pious pictures and postcards and also advertisements, cut out of catalogues. Write a title for him, "My Prayer-book" and paste it on to the cover. His having helped to make it doubles the charm.

The children could write out one or two of "The Child's Prayers to Jesus," by Father Roche, in their own prayer-book, *e.g.*, "Most Sweet Jesus in Heaven," or any other preferred, for thanksgiving, etc.

N.B.—The prayer-book a child uses on his first communion day should be the one he uses all through the time of preparation—*not* a new one—a clean white paper cover will brighten it up.

XIV. REMOTE PREPARATION FOR FIRST COMMUNION

It is very advantageous during the few weeks that precede the First Communion to keep the thought of it constantly before the children during the day, and the only way to do this is to give them something to do which will, as it were, keep them busy.

A few examples will make the meaning clear.

1. They might make up their mind to prepare a room for Our Lord, and determine

how it shall be furnished. It must be clean, therefore I must not be naughty as that would stain it. It must have a nice carpet, *e.g.*, I will not cry when I hurt myself. The walls must have pictures; each time I think of a scene in Our Lord's Life, that is putting a picture on the wall, and when He sees it, it will feel just like home for Him.

I must have a little lamp like the one He has in the church, and it must burn brightly, therefore acts of kindness, etc.

2. I must prepare a garden for Him—pull up the weeds—plant the flowers, *e.g.*, Forget-Me-nots (thoughts of Him), red flowers (thoughts of His Passion), etc., etc.

3. I must give Him a Crown of Flowers instead of that cruel Crown of Thorns. I will do without things I like, etc.

4. I must make some clothes for the little Infant Jesus. (The stitches to be made by acts of love, etc.).

5. I must make a little crib for Jesus to lie in. Some acts made gather the straw, others to make the manger, etc., the children can be the sheep, and draw nearer and nearer as the time goes on; little pictures of sheep, made to stand, representing them at the crib, etc., are helpful.

6. I will furnish a big dining-room, like the one for the Last Supper, etc.

A certain amount of latitude should be given

as to what each child may choose to do— their suggestions should be taken first, and the above or other devices only proposed if they are needed.

Something tangible, like actual straw for the crib, little counters of different colours for the good acts (no counting of bad ones) is a help.

Hang a big card quite low in the class-room, with a suitable picture, and print in colours below:

THE GREAT DAY IS COMING

XV. SOME THOUGHTS WHICH MAY BE SUGGESTED

If we had been at Bethlehem on the first Christmas night, Our Lady might perhaps have let us hold the Infant Jesus in our arms for a moment. In Holy Communion we do more: we receive Him into our very hearts, and we can fancy Our Lady saying to us— "Take great care of my little Baby Jesus, and say something very loving to Him."

Our Guardian Angel follows us to the Communion rails. When we receive Holy Communion, he bows very low, and adores Our Blessed Lord, because He knows that He

is truly God, but our Angel might well envy us, for we not only adore Him, but receive Him into our hearts.

We must ask Our Lady and our good Angel to teach us how to receive Him well.

Your soul is like a young plant—The plant needs the sun, so does your soul need Our Lord in Holy Communion.

As the plant gets life, strength, growth and food from the sun, so your soul . . .

Tell the story of the Manna, applying it to Holy Communion.*

Some Gospel Words which the children might think over and talk over in connection with Holy Communion.

Whenever helpful give the context shortly.

"Lovest thou Me?" (St. John, xxi, 15-18).

"Whom do you say that I am?" (St. Matt., xvi, 13).

"There was no room for them in the inn." (St. Luke, xi, 7).

"I will come and heal him." (St. Matt., viii, 7).

"I am not worthy." (St. Luke, vii, 7).

"A little while and you shall see Me." St. John, xvi, 16).

"Learn of Me." (St. Matt., xi, 29).

"I am the Good Shepherd." (St. John, x, 11).

* Exodus xvi., 1-36.

"I am the Life." (St. John, xi, 25).
and countless others.

XVI. HOW TO HEAR HOLY MASS

Guide the children to recognise the different sections of the Mass.

1. *The beginning.* The priest prays in preparation.

Suggest to the children some of the thoughts given in the "Children's Bread," Part I, or some of the "Child's Prayers to Jesus," by Father Roche. Or get them to choose one of their pictures to look at; or if they have a little Crucifix, they can look at that, and tell Jesus that they love Him.

2. Everybody stands up and they stand up too—like a regiment ready to fight for Our Lord—how are they going to fight?

3. They kneel down again. This is the time to *give.*

Our Lord is giving Himself for us, and to us.

What are we going to give Him? Get children's suggestions.

(Their love and some acts of self-conquest are indispensable).

Suggest that they can, if they like, say over

some of their poetry to Jesus, or tell Him some of the stories they like best. Our Lord will love to hear them.

(The essential point here is that they should "*be talking to Jesus.*" It does not, of course, matter if the poetry, etc., is pious or not. A mother loves to see her child doing anything it has been taught to do. Our Lord's love is better than that).

4. The bell rings, and all who are sitting kneel down.

The bell is to tell us that Our Lord will soon be here—we must get ready, and we must remember to pray for father and mother and all we love. This is the best time of all to pray for them—because the priest is praying for them, and Our Lord is doing so too.

5. The bell rings again; Our Lord is very near. We bow our head and say, "Jesus, I want You, come! come quickly!" (Get children's thoughts).

6. The bell rings three times. At the first time we look up: Jesus has come. The priest is holding Him in his hands—high up—for us to see, and we say lovingly: "My Lord and my God!" and bow our heads again.

Explain the second Elevation in a similar way.

7. Now Our Lord is on the altar, and we must not leave Him alone a minute. Talk to Him just as you like. You may talk to Him

about yourself, your home, your school, Himself, His goodness to us, all He has given us.

Talk over some of the things you know He did when on earth—Bethlehem or Egypt or Nazareth—or some of the wonderful things He did by the lake, or talk about the Cross, etc.

Pray for many things—for all you want, for all you love, for the dead that all their souls may go straight to Heaven.

Say one "Our Father" slowly.

8. *The bell rings again.* This is to tell us that Jesus is coming from the altar into our hearts. We try to be very quiet—inside as well as outside—and we repeat slowly and softly to ourselves, "Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming. Come, dear Jesus, come quickly into my poor little heart and make it your own home! You said when on earth: 'Let little children come to Me.' Lord, I, Your little child, come to You, I long for You. Come to me." The priest gives Our Lord to you and you hold Him tight. Keep very quiet, let Him talk to you first. If He is silent, it means He wants you to talk to Him.

9. *Thanksgiving after Communion.*

(Select from these points according to the children and circumstances.)

Give Our Lord a long, loving welcome, because you are so glad to see Him.

Ask Him to put His arms round you as He

used to put His arms round little children when on earth, and to love you as He did them.

Put both your hands into His and promise Him you will always love Him, and never do what He does not like.

Ask Him to put both His wounded hands on your head to bless and guide you.

Repeat several times: "Jesus, I love You," and tell Him why.

Tell Our Lord how many friends you have, but that He is your best friend, and then trust Him with all your secrets.

Ask Him for all you want. Tell Him you know He knows everything, that He can do everything, and that He loves you so that He will not refuse you anything. Pray for all you love.

Then thank Him over and over again,
for coming down from Heaven to us,
for loving us so much,
for living on our altars,
for coming to us in Holy Communion,
for this visit He is now paying you,
for all the care He takes of us,
for giving us His Mother,
and for all the good things He is always giving us.

Before you leave the Church pay a little visit to Our Lady—tell Her about Our Lord's visit to you—ask Her to put Her arms round

you too, and always to love you, as you promise always to love Her.

Teach carefully the Rule of Fasting before Holy Communion.

Also the fact that Our Lord wants us to receive Him every day if possible.

Explain the meaning of *Spiritual Communion.*

Advise the children to make one at every Mass when they cannot communicate sacramentally.

The best explanation is given by getting them to make one.

A helpful way is to ask them to shut their eyes, as they do for "Picture Composition" and then to make a picture of Our Lord and they themselves talking to Him.

(The pictures on p. 76 of the Children's Bread" are for this purpose, and are very suggestive).

XVII. WELCOME

The idea of "Welcome" is a very helpful one for First Communicants.

Choose some examples from the Gospel Story of the different welcomes Our Lord received when on earth:

The Welcome of Bethlehem.
The Welcome of St. Mary Magdalene on Easter Day.
The Welcome of Zaccheus.
The Welcome of Simon, the Pharisee.
The Welcome of St. Martha.
The Welcome of little children.

Get the children to choose what they will do and say to welcome Our Lord when He comes.

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